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## CURRENT COMMENT.

Is anyone aware that an international conference is going on? Alas, poor Yorick! how little time it is, to be sure, since an international conference was worth the whole front page, and was looked to by the guileless and the confiding as the beginning of a whole new dispensation! It now becomes our melancholy duty to inform our readers that one of these great events is now on, that it has been on for some time, and that it will no doubt be off again by the time this paper is in hand. Up to the moment of going to press, the news is that Mr. Lloyd George proposes to cancel the annual cash-payment of two billion gold marks by Germany and also to give Germany an extension on overdue payments until the end of the year. M. Poincaré is said to find this proposal unacceptable. All this may be mere jockeying, and probably is, but if M. Poincaré really finds this proposal unacceptable, and if Mr. George sticks to his guns, the Entente is a thing of the past, like Hans Breitmann's party; if not, it may drag on yet awhile. We do not know whether it will live or die; and we can not, in our present mood, get up a great deal of anxiety over its chances either way.

THE peoples of the world are taking exactly the right course with these fantastic fooleries of their statesmen. Instead of making a fuss and displaying violence, they attend to their own business and patiently issue to the politician yard after yard of rope wherewith to hang himself, just as we are to-day so happily doing in this country. The politician, in return, kindly obliges by discrediting himself more and more deeply with every move he makes. Every time he opens his mouth he puts his foot in it; with every act, he illuminates himself, shows himself up. For instance, we see now that Mr. Lloyd George has agreed to write his memoirs, and publish them serially and in book form, for \$400,000. The next thing is for M. Poincaré to get even with him by going into the movies, and for Mr. Harding to enter the pleasing realm of vaudeville. Then we should at last have politics openly, visibly and manifestly shaken down to its proper level. M. Poincaré as Bombastes Furioso on the films; Mr. Harding in his great act of being tossed in a blanket by Mr. Jewell and Mr. Atterbury; and Mr. Lloyd George running serially in the New York Times and the Chicago Tribune, next to pure reading matter descriptive of Polatkin and Sheikowitz's best efforts in a fall line of cloaks and suits—why, such a sight would reward years of watchful waiting, and here is a third of the programme already under contract!

THE four-score persons who are serving ten and twenty year sentences in Federal jails for expressing a wholesome scepticism about the war, will doubtless feel greatly heartened over the news that after months of effort the Attorney-General has announced the securing of indictments in one notorious war-scandal. The case involves the sale of the Old Hickory Powder Plant at Jacksonville, Tennessee. The plant cost the Government upwards of \$80 million. It was sold by one of Secretary Baker's generous subordinates for \$3,500,000, and it is asserted that a trick bid was accepted when a legitimate sale would have realized upwards of a million dollars more. Among those indicted is Secretary Baker's sales-manager, who is accused of having framed up the deal in the interest of his outside associates. Mr. Baker was off campaigning while the business was being negotiated, and he merely gave it his approval in the course of a flying trip through Washington. The interesting point of the matter is that if the Government secures convictions, the maximum sentence is two years in jail, and the impressive sum of \$30,000 may be recovered from the three defendants. In other words, it was much safer and infinitely more profitable to steal a million dollars from the Government than to say one did not like the war. On one of Herman Melville's whaling-voyages he had as a shipmate a South-Sea savage named Queequeg who kept in his chest a disreputable little carved image which he was wont to bow down to and worship as an infallible protector in time of need. When we read of eminent citizens solemnly exalting the majesty of the law, we are reminded of Queequeg.

By an easy transition we come to the convention of the American Bar Association out on the Pacific Coast. "Has it any message for us?" plaintively asks the Baltimore Sun, in commenting on this gathering. The answer is: "Words, words, words." The assembled jurists seemed to be in a mood of depression. They lamented a growing lack of reverence for constituted authority, and one of them stated dolefully that if a popular vote were taken in the matter, the Constitution itself would probably be sent to the scrap-heap. It seems curious that none of the master minds present attempted a serious analysis of this situation. The explanation of Attorney-General Daugherty, whose expensive and exacting labours in probing war-frauds did not deter him from sending the convention a hortatory telegram, seemed scarcely adequate. "Too many people in this country have been listening to the teachings of foreign doctrines," he declared. Perhaps we ought to place a very high tariff on foreign doctrines. This, however, was not Mr. Daugherty's remedy. He would have the Bar Association create an organization "to teach the principles and the necessity for sound government" in every city and hamlet. Alas, we fear this will scarcely be effective. The eminent instructors may hire their halls, but they can scarcely compete with the movies. Besides, it is clear that the disease is now too deep-seated to be cured by patriotic oratory. Yet we feel that Mr. Daugherty has it in his power to do a smart stroke for the restoration of the failing reverence for constituted authority. He could start a mild bull-flurry in that depressed stock by retiring to private life.

FOR several successive days, recently, some of the more credulous New York newspapers printed columns of melodrama about the capture, by local agents of the Depart-



ment of Justice, of the alleged leader of a band of miscreants sent here by the Russian Government to foment disturbances in the coal-fields in connexion with the strike. The *New York Times* stated, apparently on the authority of Federal officials, that "much of the violence that has taken place during the strike is traced to his activities," and Mr. Edward J. Brennan, head of the local division of Mr. Daugherty's sleuths, was quoted as saying that the man had been "fostering discontent and anarchy." A romantic official was reported to have identified the prisoner as "one of the biggest men in the Government of Lenin and Trotzky." The Russian leaders have all enjoyed a great deal of notoriety, but this particular chieftain must have escaped the head-lines, for he bore the unfamiliar name of Kowalski.

THE story of this great Red plot rumbled on vaguely for a few days, and just as we were beginning to wonder whether the Department of Justice was planning a resumption of its former recreation of blackjacking foreign-born workmen who were unfortunate enough to attract the attention of its gentle palmers, the whole yarn suffered a sudden collapse. A reporter from the *New York Call* asked Mr. Brennan for a bill of particulars and received the reply that one Kowalski, deported from our shores in 1920, had slipped into the country again and been arrested, and that was the whole story. If Kowalski was enlisted in a plot to blow up coal-fields, Mr. Brennan had not heard of it. So now we wonder who manufactured the horrendous fabrication. Incidentally we are curious about the mental calibre of editors who can include such incredible twaddle in the news "that's fit to print." They ought to know that no foreign Government needs to send obscure agents here to foment "discontent and anarchy." Our own politicians, editors and bootleggers attend to that.

WE note with regret that a dangerous anarchist is running amuck in Colorado, menacing law and order and the good name of the State. The miscreant goes by the name of Adjutant-General Hamrock, though for all we know his real name may be Braunstein, and he is the leader of a band of guerrilla outlaws calling themselves the State Rangers. When Mr. W. Z. Foster, a prominent editor of Chicago, recently alighted from a train at Denver to address a meeting of citizens in that city, he was seized by Hamrock and his plug-uglies, rushed to the State line in a motor-car, and dumped over the Wyoming border. "No law was consulted," boasted the bandit chieftain, when questioned about the outrage. It is to be hoped that the Government of Colorado will take prompt steps to wipe out this gang of cutthroats, and doubtless the Federal authorities will co-operate to have Hamrock deported to Russia, where, if we are to believe the news as printed in our best comic papers, he ought to feel perfectly at home.

THE outcome of the trial at Moscow of the Social Revolutionaries who were accused of counter-revolutionary activities against the Soviet Government, reminds one of Artemus Ward's remark (which we quote from memory) that "traters air onfortnit peple. They try to bust the Govment. They bust her, and they're heroes and statesmen. They don't bust her, and they're traters." The Social Revolutionaries failed, and therefore they were traitors, and received the kind of sentences that revolutionists may expect when they make unsuccessful attempts to destroy established Governments. But at this point the case begins to differ from similar cases in the more civilized Western nations: the Bolshevik Government, instead of executing the sentences of death, suspended them on condition that the Social Revolutionary party cease its counter-revolutionary activity. It seems to us that the Soviet Government has shown considerable astuteness in adopting this course. If it had executed the sentences it would have made martyrs of the condemned, as the British Government made martyrs of the

Irish leaders after the Easter Week rebellion, and would thus have strengthened the force of counter-revolutionary opposition, as the stupidity of the British Government strengthened the forces of revolution in Ireland.

A good deal of pious indignation has been manifested in this country and the countries of Western Europe, over the trial of these counter-revolutionists; and many protests have been sent to Moscow, and many pleas for clemency. The idea behind this agitation seems to be that the Bolshevik Government, being itself a revolutionary Government, should not be hard on other revolutionists who aspire to climb into power over its dead body. This may be logical, but it is not customary. Whenever a revolutionary Government gets into the saddle, it immediately begins to consider itself endowed with the divine right to stay there. Our own Government got into the saddle through a successful revolution; but if the Republican party, during the late war, had tried to upset Mr. Wilson's regime by force and violence, because of some difference of opinion upon political doctrine, we think the leaders who hatched up the project would speedily have gone the way of the firing squad. The Soviet Government, in a state of military and economic siege by the Western Powers from without, was menaced from within by the activities of the right-wing Socialists who, in order to break the Bolshevik power, were willing to risk the complete failure of the revolution. Under these circumstances, it was hardly to be expected that they should be regarded as less than traitors by the Soviet Government.

It has always been a principle of English law that (as Blackstone states it) "all lands in England are holden mediately or immediately of the King." Theoretically, private ownership of land does not exist, and the nominal owner is actually tenant-in-chief. There is a reflection of this principle in our own institutions, in the public right of eminent domain. But now, under guise of a measure to facilitate the conveyance of land, the new Law of Property Bill seems to vacate this principle for good and all. We have not seen the bill, but the Lord Chancellor has stated that it "abolishes the time-honoured distinction between real and personal property," and that in the future, freehold land will be in the same position as personal property, which "can only be owned in one way—absolute ownership." The humour of the thing is that this appropriate culmination and clincher of the Enclosures Acts, this final achievement of dispossession, takes place under the Government of Mr. Lloyd George, who, up to April, 1914, was full-dress speaker in the great land-restoration campaign.

AUTOCRACIES are commonly thought to be pretty swift and handy with international revolutionary propaganda, but it really takes the republics to do the job up brown. Our own achievements under the Palmers, Burlesons and Lusk are well remembered, and may be said in a sense to do us proud. Still, even Mr. Palmer was not so forethoughtful as the French Minister of Education, who has recently laid his heavy hand on the teaching of Esperanto, fearing that an international language might be a too convenient vehicle for propaganda. Our sister republic certainly takes no chances, and in this move she undeniably goes us one better. Has it ever occurred to our readers that in point of the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, or of any other mode of welfare, the ordinary citizen gets precious little practical advantage out of republicanism?

THE extent to which the British Government has withdrawn from Egypt is significantly indicated by a recent dispatch from Cairo concerning the trial, before a British military tribunal, of seven Egyptians, members of the Nationalist Committee which was headed by Zaghlul Pasha. These nationalists, it seems, were charged with the crime of distributing circulars inciting to hatred



and contempt of the Government of the King of Egypt, in violation of proclamations issued under British martial law. The defendants challenged the jurisdiction of the court, contending that Egypt is now a sovereign State and that proclamations issued by the British military authority when England was at war are, therefore, no longer effective. This claim the court disallowed, on the ground that Great Britain is still technically at war with Turkey, the former suzerain of Egypt, an argument which seems somewhat flimsy and irrelevant in the premises. Either a State is a sovereign State, or it is not. If it is a sovereign State, it certainly has jurisdiction over cases of treason against itself; if it is not, then such cases may fall naturally enough under the jurisdiction of the suzerain for which the native Government acts as catspaw. It is evident that the treason of the Egyptian nationalists is against the British Government; that treason has always consisted in advocating the cause of Egypt for the Egyptians rather than for English bondholders. It is therefore quite fitting and proper that their case should come under the jurisdiction of a British military tribunal. At the same time, this procedure makes it clear that England has withdrawn from Egypt in about the same measure as our Government has withdrawn from Haiti.

FROM Mexico by slow mail there comes the news that the *stevedores* and *longshoremen* of Tampico have purchased a lot of cranes, tractors, trailers, and other like equipment, and have signed on with the Mexican National Railway and the Federal Government to handle all the freight that is loaded and unloaded at the public wharves of the great oil-port. Labour and capital are here co-operating, as they must always do in any economic enterprise; but in this instance the men who furnish the labour and the men who furnish the capital are one and the same. As far as we know, it is not written anywhere in the law and the prophets that the labourer and the capitalist must be distinct individuals, and indeed the functions of both have sometimes been exercised with a considerable degree of success, even in large-scale enterprises, by the labourer-capitalist members of the producers' co-operative societies in Europe. The function of the monopolist is obviously dissimilar from that of the other two, since it is his business, not to furnish anything needful in the productive process, but to collect a toll for the use of the resources of nature. Monopoly is thus an obstacle to productive activity of any sort, and its burdens naturally bear with greatest weight upon the more or less experimental organizations of labourer-capitalists which might do very well indeed in any country where the land belonged to the people.

WE see by the Mexican papers, as Mr. Dooley used to say, that Secretary Hughes has been writing another letter to the Mexican Government, laying down additional rules and specifications for the adjustment of Mexican internal affairs in conformity with the heart's desire of American oil-magnates and bankers. It is not abnormal for Mr. Hughes to write an epistle of this kind to a weaker Government which has shown an inclination to place the interests of its own population above those of alien investors, and we should not care to waste time in protesting against this practice, which is an important and necessary phase of the routine of the Foreign Office of any imperialist State. We wish to suggest, however, that it would be decorous and seemly for Mr. Hughes, when he has written a note to a foreign Government in the name of the American people, at least to disclose to the American people the information that he has taken his pen in hand. It is humiliating for his fellow-citizens to have to rely, for news of the activities of the American State Department, on dispatches cabled from foreign capitals. Mr. Hughes's constantly reiterated protestations that his dealings with the lesser States to the south of us are dictated solely by altruism and neighbourly good will, would be more convincing if he would cease to imitate the stealthy manner of a yeggman slipping into a darkened jewellery shop at midnight.

SOME of our contemporaries have recently taken to comparing the Fascisti with the Bolsheviks, to the great disadvantage of both. With a great show of plausibility, it has been said that the Fascisti and the Bolsheviks have a common belief in minority-dictatorship, and a common proclivity for the use of force, and that they are therefore to be lumped all together in one bad lot. However, it has always seemed to us a matter of some significance that the Bolsheviks are united for the promotion of an economic revolution which, if it is successful, will eventually make a dictatorship impossible; while on the other hand the Fascisti are held together by devotion to an economic system which makes a dictatorship perpetually possible and perpetually necessary. As long as this little point is avoided, any comparison of the two militant groups must be misleading; but it is just possible that some of our contemporaries intended that it should be so.

THE best news that we have heard out of Germany in a long time is furnished by President Ebert's proclamation of Haydn's great air from the seventy-seventh quartette (*Kaiserquartet*) as Germany's national anthem. The words "*Deutschland über Alles*" might be improved, though it does not lie in the mouth of an American to say so. Germany's magnificent choice leads us to wonder once more whether the "Star-Spangled Banner" must be put up with for ever, and to suggest a second choice, since no one has paid much attention to our recommendation of "O God, Our Help in Ages Past," set to Sir Arthur Sullivan's arrangement of Dr. Croft's stately tune called "St. Anne's." It occurs to us that the old Tsarist national hymn is kicking about in the discard, and that next to Haydn's and "St. Anne's," it is about the noblest of them all. Why not fish it out and adopt it? This country was always officially friendly to the Tsarist Government and now that that fine old regime is dead, is even more friendly than when it was alive. We are confident that the State Department would be very cordial in endorsing this delicate attention to an old friend's fragrant memory, and the country would moreover get a national air to which one could rise with a good grace.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE gave us the surprise of our life when on 28 July he claimed credit for getting the plan for the League of Nations incorporated into the Versailles treaty. "I was the first man," he said, "to propose in the Council of Ten at Paris that the League of Nations should be an essential part of the treaty." We always were given to understand that this was Mr. Wilson's peculiar enterprise, and indeed if there were any international copy-right-arrangement covering the ideas and utterances of diplomats, we should expect to see the firm of Wilson and Colby preparing to bring suit. Not only does Mr. George thus appropriate what we always thought was Mr. Wilson's part in the transaction; but he employs language which lays him open to a serious suspicion of plagiarism. "The League of Nations is an essential part of the machinery of civilization. If it succeeds, civilization is safe. If it fails, and I speak advisedly, civilization is doomed, doomed." This is a distinct echo of what we heard long ago about the heart of the world being broken if the idea of the League should fall through. In a matter like this, there is honour enough for all; we hope therefore that Mr. George's remarks will not choke off any subscriptions to the Wilson Memorial Fund.

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## TOPICS OF THE TIME.

### COMING TO A SHOWDOWN.

THE railway-executives seem to have made about the same forecast of this strike that we did, and to have missed their guess as badly as we did. They thought, apparently, that by taking on the unions one at a time, beginning with the relatively small and weak shopmen's union, they could win without much damage to general transportation. It seemed to an outsider that the president of the Erie Railway put it quite reasonably when he said that the executives "can hold out just a little longer than the men can." It is not so clear now that this is the case. The engineers and firemen have taken a hand, and labour in private shops like the Brooks works and the Cooke works has refused to touch locomotives that the railway-companies farmed out for repairs. Engines and cars meanwhile are going from bad to worse, accidents are beginning to happen, transcontinental traffic is interrupted, the public is beginning to show some degree of nervousness, and a general settlement seems as remote as it did six weeks ago. We observe, too, that public opinion is not wholly on the side of the operators; and that is another point upon which our expectations are happily disappointed.

Another thing that we did not look for is the utter rout of the Government. Count Tolstoy said years ago that political government was so discredited and impoverished that it had literally nothing left but violence. Government at once made its invariable pompous move with troops and Federal marshals, and has had its bluff handsomely called by the trainmen, who simply quit work and left the troops and the stalled trains to look at one another. Meanwhile poor Mr. Harding was swiftly smitten on one cheek by the operators and on the other by the strikers; and the two contending forces have ushered the Government out on the side lines and warned it not to trespass on the gridiron while the game is on. The Government can do nothing but obey, because there is a big vote at stake; and there you are! We think that this spectacle ought to be quite affecting to those who still retain a confiding interest in politics and political government. They tolerate a bureaucracy which has grown so enormously that one parasite now rides on the backs of every two producers—and this is what its actual authority amounts to!

It should be clear to anyone, we think, that politics has no place in the present imbroglio. The railwaymen's strike, the miners' strike, are evidences of just one thing, which is that industry can no longer stagger under the burden of rent to monopoly, wages to labour and interest to capital. That is what is meant by the loose statement, so commonly made, that our economic structure is breaking down. That structure is unquestionably breaking down; and it was to give a clear idea of this break-down and the reasons for it, that we chose the present time to publish the admirable articles of Mr. John S. Codman, which we are now carrying. As the demand for rent rises, there comes a time when productive industry simply can not meet it, and continue to meet a rising demand for wages and interest as well. The capital example of this is just now, probably, the agricultural industry. The history of such collisions as those now going on in the coal-fields and on the railways, is that wages are reduced, and labour strikes; dividends are passed and capital strikes; and industry is thus checked or stopped, while monopoly remains unimpaired and rent goes on. Now, the common-sense view of the situation appears to us to be this: labour is necessary to industry, capital is necessary to industry,

but monopoly is not. There is no way in the world for industry to get on without labour and capital, but it can easily get on without monopoly. Therefore, instead of checking industry by a continuous struggle to keep wages up at the expense of interest and to keep interest up at the expense of wages, we suggest that both wages and interest be permitted to keep themselves up at the expense of rent.

It is all very well to complain of Mr. Harding, or to poke fun at him, for the ineptitude of his efforts to settle the strikes; but, if one side or the other or both sides prefer to fight it out, what can he do? There is no place that we can see in a controversy of this kind where he can effectively break in. The most that he could do is to take over the properties for operation by the Government, and he is well aware that a threat of this would be idle. It would probably quite suit the railway-executives to have the roads taken over, for they were never interested in running a stable business, but in getting easy money. The late Mr. Harriman spoke for his ilk when he said that he was not a six-per cent man. The easy money is now pretty well milked out of railroading, and no doubt the operators would be happy to retire decorously upon the noble compensation that they could count on getting, and leave to others the dull task of operating transportation as a service, pure and simple. No doubt also the railwaymen would be satisfied, for this move would put them in comparative security as part of the bureaucratic machine. But the public has seen something of governmental railroading, and in the terse eloquence of Abe Potash, they seen enough already. The memory of it is too fresh and too lacerating. The Administration does not know much, but we think it knows enough to abstain from this course as long as it can. We notice in all the current treatment of the topic precious little encouragement of the idea of governmental railroading.

As to coal, we think that as long as the Government confined itself to taking over and operating the actual mines, and did nothing to disturb the monopoly-control of unopened coal-beds—which course it would naturally follow—the operators would be quite agreeable and the miners also. It would not be so bad to name one's own price for the privilege of sitting back and watching the Government do the work, if one could still keep one's monopoly intact by retaining ownership of unworked coal-beds. Also if one were a miner with a vote, the prospect of being incorporated into a bureaucracy would be fairly attractive. But the public is pretty well aware that the expense of this mode of adjustment would be felt in its coal-bills as well as in its tax-bills and we do not think that the Administration is at all likely to embark upon this course unless driven to it as some unfortunates are driven to suicide.

For our part, now that matters have gone as far as they have and taken the direction that they have taken, we hope that it will come to just this; not because we think that governmental operation is a good thing but because we think it the worst possible thing, and because we believe that about one more heaping adult dose of it would be enough to switch the country for ever off from following the fetish of bureaucracy, and put it on the way to find out what the matter really is and what can be done about it. The prospects are that the free and the brave will have no great trouble about keeping cool this winter, and that their safest and most dependable transportation-facilities will be those furnished by Shanks's mare. This is annoying enough, no doubt; yet the judicious can put up with it cheerfully for the sake of what our liberal friends might perhaps call the "moral lesson" that it enforces.



## THE RAID ON THE SUGAR-BOWL.

IN their consideration of and final action upon the sugar-tariff schedule, the senatorial joy-riders down at Washington showed their finest pace. In the fervour of their effort the flying senators dashed triumphantly past the limits set for them by the Finance Committee. No one would pretend that that committee has been at all parsimonious in the matter of tariff-rates. It has made Mark Hanna and Aldrich seem in retrospect almost free-traders. But two dollars a hundred pounds, the rate fixed upon sugar by the committee, was not lofty enough for the senators. They raised it thirty-one cents, and slipped the higher figure through.

This country imports from fifty-five to sixty per cent of its sugar, and virtually all of that amount comes from Cuba. Cuba enjoys a tariff-differential of twenty per cent. Thus, under the proposed law the rate against Cuba will be \$1.84 per hundred pounds. Under the present emergency-tariff law it is \$1.60 and under the Underwood law it was one dollar. The tariff on sugar is reflected directly in the price. Thus, other things being equal, with an annual American consumption of five million tons, the tariff accelerators would seem to have added some \$84 million to the nation's annual sugar bill. In fact, the figure is higher. The refiner's margin, generally speaking, rises with the price of sugar, for among the factors that go to make it are the element of waste, insurance, and the cost of carrying stocks. High-priced sugar means high margins, which in turn must be added to the final price.

The proponents of the sugar-bowl levy made some rather remarkable arguments. In one breath they declared that the big budget-deficit made imperative an increased revenue from sugar; in the next they predicted that after a few years of high duties the stimulated domestic production would wipe foreign sugars out of our markets altogether—thus neatly demolishing their first proposition. Surely the galleries must have been deeply moved as one senator after another heaved his bulk upon the floor and predicted in tearful tones the dire fate that awaited the beloved American workingman and the beloved American farmer unless sugar were taxed to the skies. "You can not drive the American labourer down the way they have driven the slaves down in Cuba," explained Senator Gooding. "God forbid that the time will come when labour will not be organized in America to defend their rights!"

It may be observed that Senators Ransdell and Broussard, spokesmen for the Louisiana cane-industry, and Senator Smoot, the leader of the senatorial beet-sugar forces of the West, emitted no pious wishes about labour being organized, for unions are scarcely encouraged by those who rule over the sugar-industry; but they were strong on the sacred duty of maintaining "American standards of living among the workers." If any "Nigger" labourer from the Louisiana cane-fields had been present, he would have been amazed at the glowing description of these standards by the senators from Louisiana, and would no doubt have gone away wondering why life was so harshly different from rhetoric. It was brought out in the debate that the cost of producing a ton of sugar in Louisiana is nearly three times the cost in Cuba, though the labour-charges are not materially different; but this fact did not stem the tide of eloquence. As for Mr. Smoot, he was magnificent in his plea for the sons of toil in America, and the American home. When Senator Gerry interrupted these raptures to make some pointed inquiries about the employment of children as young as eight years in thinning the sugar-beet fields, Mr. Smoot admitted that children were paid for virtually playing in the beet-

fields for a few hours a day in the pleasant weather, and he extolled this as a healthful custom which "kept them off the streets" and enabled them to start bank-accounts. Senator Gerry cited a report of the Federal Children's Bureau showing that the average working-day of children between the ages of eight and thirteen years in the beet-fields was nine and ten hours, and that such children were from one to seven years below their normal grades in school; but he was bowled over by a flood of Republican oratory.

It is true that the sugar-industry has had a bad year; but in that its experience has not been different from that of other industries, and there is no reason why the rest of the country should be saddled with the costs of a permanent bounty to make up for this slump. Before the war the policy of a gradual reduction of the sugar-tariff had been adopted, to lead eventually to free trade. The need for revenue during the war interrupted this healthful process, and now Mr. Smoot and his colleagues have succeeded in doing away with it most thoroughly. In reality, the sugar industry is suffering from *katzenjammer* as a result of its war-time profiteering-debauch. After Mr. Hoover, as food-dictator, had fixed prices beyond the fondest dreams of the sugar men, they reaped a golden harvest. Western beet-sugar concerns doubled and tripled their capitalization. Special cash-dividends of fifty per cent gladdened the hearts of absentee owners. Stocks that sold below twenty dollars a share in 1914 yielded double that amount in dividends a few years later. The Utah-Idaho Company, in which Senator Smoot holds a modest 440 shares, yielded a stock-dividend of 150 per cent, in addition to annual cash-payments of nine to twelve per cent during the fat years. This happy time is ended. Normalcy has set in; and the generous Mr. Hoover, *absit omen!* is fixing coal-prices.

But the discussions of these domestic matters were not the most illuminating portions of the debate on the sugar-tariff. The high light was furnished by a letter from Senator Smoot to General Crowder, who for some time past has been acting as a sort of viceroy over the not too free and independent Republic of Cuba. Mr. Smoot wrote the letter back in January. He has not displayed undue haste in making it public, but rumours of it have dribbled out, so that it became embarrassing for him to make his speech without reading the missive.

In the letter, Senator Smoot asked General Crowder to have the Cuban sugar-crop of this year limited to 2,500,000 tons. In return he offered to push three propositions. The first was to have Cuban sugars, brought here for refining in transit to Europe, admitted in bond, duty-free. The second was a tariff-rate of one and four-tenths cents per pound on Cuban sugar imported into this country. The third was an arrangement whereby the War Finance Corporation, which was revived ostensibly in order to assist American farmers to pull through after the bankers had deflated them, would "assist in financing the sugar-refiners in their exportation of sugar to foreign countries." Our Atlantic Coast refiners, it may be explained, are said to own over half the Cuban sugar-fields.

It would be interesting to know whether the powerful Mr. Smoot had the benison of the Administration on this modest proposal, or whether he sought independently to dictate the amount of Cuban production on behalf of the interests he represents. The New York *World* has intimated that the letter was sent with the approval of Mr. Hoover, and Mr. Hoover has refused to discuss the charge. At any rate, the cane was already in the ground, and even General Crowder could



not pull it up, and probably even the most obsequious Cuban Government would not dare to force the planters to burn one-fourth of their growing crops. Cuban production is close to four million tons, or nearly sixty per cent above Senator Smoot's proposed limit. Since our domestic crop fell below expectations this year, the Cuban surplus saved the American consumer from an approximation to war-time prices.

Thus the debate on sugar has opened novel diplomatic vistas. We had supposed that the conduct of our foreign relations was the particular province of the Secretary of State. Apparently individual senators may carry on individual negotiations in matters vitally affecting the internal economy of neighbouring countries. This is a practice scarcely in accord with law'n order, as prescribed in the sacrosanct Constitution. It would seem to place the present head of the Department of State in an extremely humiliating position. Mr. Hughes is a great stickler for Constitutional regularity; yet Senator Smoot's assumption of his prerogatives has not drawn from him a single audible peep. As we recall, it was a Democratic congressman who said to Grover Cleveland, "What's the Constitution between friends?" Perhaps that phrase enjoys a lingering potency.

### BACK TO MALTHUSIA.

WITH two million good Britishers out of work, and sixty millions of pounds budgeted for distribution during the next eight months in the form of unemployment-doles, Mr. Lloyd George's Government has finally been driven to admit that the United Kingdom is suffering from something more than a mere temporary indisposition. The Empire Settlement Act constitutes such an admission, for it initiates an attempt to remove permanently from the country a part of the people who can not now make a living there. Under the provisions of the act, which recently received the royal assent, the Government is prepared to devote three million pounds a year, for each of the next fourteen years, to the financing of emigration to the Dominions, provided the Governments of the Dominions will duplicate these advances, pound for pound. The plan is that in the case of each male candidate approved for evacuation to a particular colony, the home-Government and the Government of the Dominion concerned shall together advance two-thirds of the cost of migration, one-half of this amount to be regarded as a loan, and the other half as an outright gift. If there is no hitch in the proceedings, the great charitable institutions of the Empire will lay out in this fashion a total of something more than eighty millions of pounds.

According to the London *Daily Telegraph*, this is "the most hopeful project of its kind in modern history"; but we could admit that, we think, without admitting very much. When a Government takes to deporting its people, it thereby acknowledges that there is something fundamentally wrong with the economic life of the country, and the whole point of such a situation seems to us to lie in the educational value of this grand acknowledgment, and not in any economic value of the deportation itself. Indeed, we would wish nothing better for the English people than that they should be brought to regard the economic ills of their country, not as isolated and accidental visitations, but as the symptoms of a chronic disease.

If a part of the population is now unable to get a living, and has no prospect of being able to do so, the derangement must be chronic, as the Government admits it is. But it does not follow inevitably that the indigents should be packed off to another quarter of the

world. If the poverty of the individuals in question arises out of an actual shortage of natural resources, it may be advisable to ship them overseas to some country where such resources exist in greater abundance; but as long as the resources of the home country have not been brought into use; as long as men who want to work are excluded by artificial barriers from the opportunity to do so; and as long as men who do work are legally deprived of the greater part of the product of their labour, and are thus held permanently on the border of starvation, it seems to us rather illogical to assume that "overpopulation" is the prime cause of poverty, and that subsidized emigration is the natural remedy. When the British Government proceeds upon this assumption, it leaves the existing system of exploitation intact, and simply removes a part of the super-surplus of labour which this system has created as a burden upon itself.

The theory that "overpopulation" is the root of all evil has enjoyed considerable prestige ever since it was so plausibly presented about a century ago by the Reverend Thomas Malthus. This gentleman had the notion that the poor were the authors of their own poverty, and he seems to have believed quite sincerely that the entire population could never be raised to the level of subsistence, much less above that level, until the masses had been taught to regulate and restrain their power to multiply and replenish the earth.

When Malthus says that poverty as we know it is due to a tendency of the population to press upon the means of subsistence, he leaves out of account, strangely enough, the fact that man is the only member of the animal creation which is able to reproduce its food, and that, therefore, granted free access to the passive factor in this process of reproduction—the land—actual pressure upon the means of subsistence is so remote as to be practically inconceivable. The poor are, by and large, precisely those to whom this access has been denied. In proclaiming the existence of a fundamental economic disorder, Malthus did some such service as the British politicians are now doing; but owing to this extraordinary oversight, his diagnosis is meaningless, and his recommendations are misleading.

Assisted emigration is probably all very well under certain circumstances, but as a substitute-measure to ease off the pressure due to economic exploitation, not much can be said for it. Similarly, there can be no rational objection to the dissemination of knowledge which will make parenthood entirely voluntary, for whatever may be the character of the economic order, we can see no possible reason why any two people should give life to a child which they do not want. In so far as this knowledge tends to put such matters entirely within the control of the individuals concerned, with no questions asked concerning motive or result, it makes for freedom, and is to be desired accordingly; but when birth-controllers, like Malthus, offer this as a nostrum, as a substitute for full economic freedom, we think that they are leading themselves and their followers far astray.

### FROM THE CHINESE MORALISTS.

(Translated from the Chinese by Mayling Soong.)

#### A MAID OF THE CHI KINGDOM.

Hsu Wu was a poor girl of the East Sea District of the Chi Kingdom. With Li Wu and some other girls of the neighbourhood she took turns in providing candles for the evening spinning. But being exceedingly poor, Hsu Wu was often unable to supply the light when her turn came.

Li Wu one day said to her companions, "Often Hsu Wu fails



to provide candles when it is her turn. Let us not share our candles with her."

"What words are these?" exclaimed Hsu Wu. "Your handmaiden, knowing full well her poverty and that she can not furnish light every time it is her turn, is always the first to arrive, and the last to leave the evening's spinning. Before your arrival, she has swept and tidied the room; when you arrive, she takes the seat farthest from the candle. As for the room, one person more in it does not make the candle less bright, one person less does not make it more bright. Why, then, be so saving of the flickering light on the eastern wall? Let your handmaiden continue her menial services so that in exchange she may receive the favour of your kindly pity. Can this not be?"

Li Wu made no reply, so they all continued to work together at their evening tasks. Never again did she complain.

Thus observed a moralist in reference to this story: "A girl was able by words to prevent her neighbours from casting her forth. Should words, therefore, be lightly looked upon?"

(From "Stories of Famous Women in Chinese History.")

#### TSAO KUEI'S DISCOURSE ON STRATEGY.

IN the days when the soldiers of the Chi Kingdom were on the eve of invading the Lu Kingdom, there lived a man named Tsao Kuei, a subject of the Lu lord. Tsao Kuei informed his neighbors that he was going to the court of the Lu lord. They replied, "Let the meat-eating, self-indulgent nobility take care of State affairs. What business is it of yours?"

He replied, "The meat-eating people are stupid. They are not capable of planning ahead." Then he set forth to see the Lu lord.

Upon his arrival there, he asked, "My Lord, what virtue have you which would endear you sufficiently to the hearts of your subjects to ensure the loyalty necessary to a successful campaign?"

Replied the lord, "Such clothing and food as I have, I dare not use alone, I share them with the needy."

"This benefits but a few; it is not enough to inspire your subjects to follow you to death."

"Then," ventured the lord, "I have the protection of the gods, for I have never failed to make the sacrifices in strict accordance with traditions."

"Half-hearted faith and casual offerings do not necessarily win you the favour of the gods."

"Finally," replied the lord, "I have judged all suits in my kingdom according to my conscience, and in each case I have striven to temper justice with mercy."

"To deal justly with all people in all things is a virtue which must have endeared you to your subjects. Loyalty begets loyalty. You can afford to go to battle. Permit me to accompany you."

Then they rode forth to the battle-field at Chao Chao to meet the enemy.

The Lu lord was about to have the gong beaten to signal the advance when Tsao Kuei said, "Not yet!"

In the meantime, the enemy's gong rang out the signal for the advance and their men charged the Lu line, which held firm. The Chi soldiers then withdrew to their former position. This happened a second time. At the third sounding of the enemy's gong, Tsao Kuei turned to the Lu lord, saying, "Now is our chance. Let us meet them. Beat the gong vigorously."

Eagerly the Lu soldiers now rushed forward, forcing the enemy to retreat.

"Give chase!" commanded the Lu lord.

"Wait!" cautioned Tsao Kuei, whereupon he mounted on a war-chariot and anxiously scanned the banners of the fleeing enemy. Then he leapt down, knelt on the ground, and closely examined the tracks made by the retreating chariots.

"Now give chase," he ordered. The enemy was routed.

After the victory, the Lu lord asked him why he had done as he did. He replied:

"In battle, much depends upon strategy. The enemy at the first onslaught were fresh and confident. At the second, they were somewhat fatigued. At the third, they were exhausted, while our men had not wasted their strength and so were able to meet and overcome them. Our enemy is not a weak opponent; for all we knew, the retreat might have been a stratagem. The Chi Kingdom is so large that another army might have been set in ambush. For that reason, I made sure that their retreat was disorderly and hence genuine before permitting our men to pursue."

(From the "Spring and Autumn Annals" of Confucius.)

#### THE RECORD OF A PEACH-BLOSSOM VALLEY.

IN the year Ta Yuen of the Tsin Dynasty, there lived a native of Woo Lin, a fisherman by trade. One day, this fisherman, in

his little skiff, followed the course of a mountain stream. So absorbed was he in meditation that he had forgotten how long he had been drifting, when suddenly he came upon a peach-blossom grove, growing on both sides of the stream. The grove extended some distance before him, all the trees laden with exquisite peach blossoms. As far as he could see, there was not a tree of any other kind. The ground beneath the trees was carpeted with a profusion of the delicately tinted petals. The fisherman, greatly astonished, continued his course till he soon reached the end, and came upon the source of the stream.

Directly beyond the spring lay a mountain with a small opening from which light seemed to radiate. The fisherman then left his skiff and entered the cavity, which was so narrow at first that there was scarce room for him to push through. When he had advanced a little way, his eyes were dazzled by a sudden and overpowering brightness. He found himself standing on a vast plain. Here and there stood houses, neat and well-kept. He saw fields planted with all manner of growing things, mirror-like ponds, mulberry and bamboo trees, and between the fields, small paths ran lengthwise and crosswise. From all directions came the sound of cocks crowing and dogs barking. Men and women, wearing clothes similar to those of the outside world, were planting, digging, and working in the fields. Yellow-haired old folk, and young, the latter with hair loosened and hanging down their backs, talked and laughed joyously.

Then they saw him. At first, they were astounded and frightened, but when their fright abated, they asked him whence he came and why he had come, who he was, and how he had reached there. He answered all their questions, whereupon they immediately invited him to their homes and set wine before him; killed chickens, and prepared them in his honour.

As soon as the news of the fisherman's arrival reached the other people of the hamlet, they all came to look at him and to ask questions. They told him that during the reign of the Chin Dynasty, they had fled from the misrule and confusion then prevalent, taking with them their wives, children, and all the people of their village, and had come to this place away from the rest of the world. As they had no desire to leave here, they had broken all connexions with the outside world. They asked him the name of the reigning dynasty, and as they had never heard of the rise and fall of the Han Dynasty, needless to say they were entirely ignorant of the Wei and the Tsin Dynasties. Then the fisherman explained all that had taken place since their retreat from the outside world. His hearers lamented and uttered great sighs during his recital, and when he had finished, the newcomers invited him to their homes, where wine and food were again set before him.

When, after a few days, the fisherman bade the people goodbye, they cautioned him never, under any circumstances, to betray their retreat to the outside world. He came back through the opening, found his skiff, and returned home, carefully noting all the landmarks along the way. Upon his arrival in his own village, he went to the magistrate and related his adventure. The magistrate then sent some men to follow him, but the fisherman could not find the landmarks again, grew confused, and finally gave up. At this time, Liu Tse-chee, an upright and scholarly man of Nanyang, heard of the adventure, became very enthusiastic, and planned to visit this strange country himself. But before it could be done, he fell ill and died. Afterward, no one ever attempted to find the spring again.

(A classic of the Tsin Dynasty.)

#### NOTES ON "MOBY DICK."

##### I

FRESH from a second reading of Melville's "Moby Dick," I am surprised by the heterodoxy of certain strong impressions. It is a book which leads to violent convictions. I first read it as a boy, on ship-board, somewhere about the world; I was enthralled by the story, but beyond a keen sensation of pleasure I retained no definite recollection of it. Thus, upon a second reading, the book had for me all the delight of a new discovery. Again I was enthralled, this time by more than the story; by all the infernal power and movement of the piece, by that intangible quality which, through suggestion and stimulation, gives off the very essence of genius. I do not mean atmosphere—Conrad creates atmosphere—but something above atmosphere, the aura of sublime and tragic greatness; not light but illumination, the glance of a brooding and unappeasable god.



The art of "Moby Dick" as a masterpiece of fiction lies in the element of purposeful suspense which flows through the tale from beginning to end in a constantly swelling current; and in the accumulating grandeur and terror evoked by the whale-motif. This achievement which, like every such feat of genius, defies either description or criticism, is what makes the book superlatively great. Melville performs the most difficult task of literary creation—that of encompassing and fixing the vague form of a tremendous visionary conception.

The high-water mark of inspiration in the book is reached in the dramatic dialogue between Ahab and the carpenter over the making of the wooden leg. This scene is preceded by the finest piece of descriptive characterization in the volume, written in Melville's own style (not aped after Sir Thomas Browne): the sketch of the old ship-carpenter. Starting abruptly from the heights of this description, the dialogue soars straight to the realm of pure literary art. It is the equal of Shakespeare's best dialogue. One longs to hear it given by a couple of capable actors: the scene, the confusion of the "Pequod's" deck by night on the whaling-grounds; the lurid flame of the smithy in the background, in the foreground the old bewhiskered carpenter planing away at Ahab's ivory leg; before the footlights an audience familiar with the book, or, lacking this, any intelligent audience, the want of special knowledge being supplied by a plain prologue. The scene exactly as it stands is magnificently dramatic.

This, however, is a burst of inspiration. The ablest piece of sustained writing in "Moby Dick" unquestionably is the extraordinary chapter on "The Whiteness of the Whale." Here we have a *tour de force* without excuse in the narrative, a mere joyous rush of exhilaration and power, a throwing out of the arms with a laugh and a flash of the eye. "The Whiteness of the Whale," I said to myself, as I came to this chapter; "what the devil have we now?" I feared that Melville would exceed his licence, that he might be going to strain the case a little. For it seemed an inconsequential heading for a chapter; and when I ran over the leaves, noting how long the effort was, my heart misgave me. But before a page is finished, the reader catches the idea and perceives the masterliness of the attack. Throughout the chapter, as one watches the author play with his theme, letting it rise and fall naturally (nothing is ever still that comes from Melville's hand—even his calms shimmer and shake with an intensity of heat); as one follows this magically dexterous exercise, all of which, apart from its intrinsic beauty, contributes in some ineffable manner to the charm and mystery of the tale; one is aware of the thrill which comes but seldom in a lifetime of reading.

As a piece of sheer writing, this chapter on the whiteness of the whale is a remarkable achievement. Its creator could do anything with words. I wonder that it has not been more commonly utilized in the higher teaching of English; I know of no effort in the language which affords a better study of what can be accomplished by the magic of literary power.

## II

"Moby Dick" stands as one of the great nautical books of the world's literature. What I have to say of it on this score, therefore, may to Melville's public, which is almost exclusively a shore-public, appear to be malicious heresy. But I am concerned only with establishing what seems to me an interesting verity;

I want to find the real Melville, because he is so well worth finding; I would not be engaged in criticism had I not first become engaged in love and admiration.

I am surprised, when all is said and done, to find how little of real nautical substance there is in "Moby Dick." It would not be overstating the case to say that the book lacks the final touch of nautical verisimilitude. In criticizing the book from this viewpoint, one must, of course, make due allowance for the refining and rarifying influence of the imaginative pitch to which the whole work is cast; an influence which naturally tends to destroy a share of nautical realism, as, indeed, it tends to destroy all realism. Yet, when this allowance is made, there remains in "Moby Dick" a certain void, difficult of estimate or description, where the shadows, at least, of nautical reality should stand.

This void, of course, appears only to the sailor who reads the book; no one else would notice it. It is not that the book lacks the framework of nautical reality; it would be idle for me to attempt to deny what plainly exists. "Moby Dick," indeed, is in the generic sense of the term a nautical piece; it is a tale of ships, sailing, and the sea. We have a view of the "Pequod," of certain seafaring scenes and operations; we have a picture of the business of whaling, the handling of boats, the cutting in of the great fish alongside the ship, the final labours on deck and in the hold; we have a general background of nautical affairs, so that the scenes inevitably stand out against a tracery of sails, clouds, horizon and sea; and all this is correctly written, from the nautical standpoint, save in a few insignificant particulars. Melville's treatment of the whaling-industry, in fact, is classic. No one else has done such work, and no one ever will do it again; it alone serves to rescue from oblivion one of the most extraordinary episodes of human enterprise.

But this fidelity to the business of whaling is not precisely what I mean by nautical verisimilitude. How, then, shall I define the lack of this verisimilitude which I find in "Moby Dick"? Shall I put it that there is not quite enough of sure detail, in any instance where a nautical scene or evolution is described, to convince the sailor-reader that the man who wrote the words understood with full instinctive knowledge what he was writing about? A sailor, a seaman in the real sense of the word, would involuntarily have followed so closely the scene or evolution in hand, that he could not have fallen short of the final touch of realism; he would himself have been a part of the picture, he would quite unconsciously have written from that point of view, and the added colour and particularity, in the case of "Moby Dick," far from detracting from the strength and purpose of the work, would on the contrary have considerably augmented them.

Melville, quite unconsciously, did not write the book that way. To his eye, indeed, it plainly was not so much a nautical work as it was a study in the boundless realm of human psychology. Yet, having taken the sea for his background, he could not have failed, had he been a sailor, to fill the void I mention. From this one gets a measure of Melville's spiritual relation to seafaring.

Most mysteries submit to a simple explanation; they are no mysteries at all. In the present case, a closer view of seafaring alone is needed. All Melville's seafaring experience lay before the mast. He gives no indication that he was in the least degree interested in this experience as a romantic profession; he



speaks of obeying orders, admitting that those who commanded his activities on the sea had a right to require him to do anything under the sun; but I have never seen a passage in which he celebrated the task of learning to be a good seaman—except as a piece of extraneous description—or one showing the slightest interest in the sea professionally. He was decidedly not looking towards the quarter-deck. When afloat, he seems simply to have been mooning around the vessel, indulging his fancy to the full, chiefly observing human nature; realistically intent on the ship's company, but merely romanticizing over the ship herself; in short, not making any advance towards becoming himself a sailor, towards the acquisition of those instinctive reactions which make man and ship dual parts of the same entity.

I would not be thought so absurd as to blame Melville for not becoming a true sailor; I am merely trying to run the fact to earth. He was divinely inefficient as a seaman; he never learned the lore of a ship, beyond attaining the necessary familiarity with her external parts, with the execution of simple commands, and with the broader features of her control and operation. His nautical psychology was that of the forecandle, the psychology of obeying orders. For months on end, at sea, he felt no curiosity to know where the ship was or whither she was going; he never understood exactly why she was made to perform certain evolutions; he helped to execute the order, and watched the result with a mild and romantic perplexity. The psychology of the quarter-deck, the psychology of handling a vessel, was foreign to him.

This is why his nautical atmosphere is made up of relatively unimportant details and insignificant evolutions, such as a green man before the mast would have compassed; while infinitely more important details and more significant evolutions, and the grasp of the whole ship as a reality, all of which would have been in the direct line of the narrative, and would only have intensified the effect he was striving to produce, were passed over in silence because they were beyond his ken. He might have made the ship, as well as the whale, contribute to the mysterious grandeur of the book's main theme; in no single instance does he attempt to do so. The "Pequod," to all intents and purposes, is a toy ship; when, indeed, she is not a ship nautically fictitious, a land-lubber's ship, a ship doing the impossible.

If Captain Ahab says "Brace the yards!" once, he says it a hundred times; whereas there are dozens of commands that he might have shouted with stronger effect, both realistic and literary; whereas, furthermore, the order to "brace the yards" means nothing in particular, without a qualifying direction, and never would be given in this incomplete form on a ship's deck. This is a minor instance; but the sum of these nautical ineptitudes throughout the book is fairly staggering.

To cite a major instance, the account of the typhoon off the coast of Japan is a sad failure; it might have been written by one of your Parisian arm-chair romanticists, with a knowledge of the sea derived from a bathing-beach experience. The ship is an imaginary piece of mechanism; no coherent sense of the storm itself is created; no realization of the behaviour of a vessel in a typhoon runs behind the pen. Ahab's battered quadrant, thrown to the deck and trampled on the day before, is allowed to come through the storm reposing as it fell, so that his eye may be caught by it

there when the weather has cleared. In fact, both as a piece of writing and as an essential of the tale, the scene wholly fails to justify itself. It serves no apparent purpose; it seems to have been lugged in by the ears.

How a man with an experience of some years on the sea, a man who could write the superlative chapter on the whiteness of the whale, should fail so completely to present an adequate or even an understanding picture of a ship beset by a heavy circular storm—here is a mystery not so easy of solution. It would seem to be plainly evident that Melville had never passed through a typhoon, and never, probably, had been on the Japan whaling-grounds. But he must have seen plenty of storms at sea. With all his passionate descriptive power, however, he is strangely handicapped when he comes to imagine a scene beyond the range of his experience; his literary equipment did not readily lend itself to the translation of an imaginative picture in terms of reality.

Certainly Melville had in his blood none of the "feeling of the sea," that subtle reaction which is the secret animating spring of the real sailor. Romantic appreciation he had, and imaginative sentiment; but these must never be confounded with seamanship. Yet, in defence of his nautical laxity in the latter half of "Moby Dick," it should be recognized that, by the time he had reached these chapters, he must have been exhausted with the intensity of the emotional effort; and that, after juggling with forms for two-thirds of the volume, he had now definitely forsaken all attempts at realism. Ahab alone would have worn out an ordinary man in short order.

### III

I do not remember having seen in print a discussion of the extraordinary technical development of "Moby Dick." In terms of the craft of writing, the book is a surpassing feat of legerdemain. Briefly, "Moby Dick" is the only piece of fiction I know of, which at one and the same time is written in the first and the third persons. It opens straightforwardly as first-person narration. "Call me Ishmael"—"I thought I would sail about a little"—"I stuffed a shirt or two into my carpet bag, tucked it under my arm, and started for Cape Horn and the Pacific." So it runs, throughout the opening scenes in New Bedford and Nantucket; the characters are real persons, seen through Ishmael's eyes; they speak real speech; the scenes are delineated with subjective realism. Melville is telling a story. His (or Ishmael's) meeting with Queequeg, and their first night together in the big feather bed at the Spouter Inn, are intensely human and alive. Even Bildad and Peleg are creations of realism. The first note of fancifulness is introduced with the Ancient Mariner who accosts Ishmael and Queequeg on the pier in Nantucket. The book, however, still holds to the technical channel of first person narration; and it is through Ishmael's eyes that one sees the "Pequod" sail from Nantucket.

Then, without warning, the narrative in Chapter twenty-nine jumps from the first to the third person; begins to relate conversations which could not possibly have been overheard by Ishmael and to describe scenes which his eye could not possibly have seen; follows Ahab into his cabin and Starbuck into the recesses of his mind, and launches boldly on that sea of mystical soliloquy and fan-



ciful unreality across which it sweeps for the remainder of the tale. As it progresses, Ishmael sinks farther and farther from sight, and the all-seeing eye of the third person comes more and more into play.

Yet, even at this stage, the technical form of first-person narration is not entirely abandoned; is kept along, as it were, like an attenuated wraith. As the "Pequod" sights ship after ship, the narrative momentarily reappears, only to be discarded once more at the first opportunity; so that, of the main body of the book, it may truly be said that it is written in both the first and the third persons. For instance, chapter ninety-one, "The 'Pequod' Meets the 'Rosebud'": "It was a week or two after the last whaling-scene recounted, and when we [not they] were slowly sailing over a sleepy, vapoury, midday sea. . . ." This is a recurrence to first person narration in the midst of pages of third-person soliloquy. But turning to Chapter CXXVIII, "The 'Pequod' Meets the 'Rachel'": "Next day, a large ship, the 'Rachel,' was descried, bearing directly down upon the 'Pequod,' all her spars thickly clustering with men"—this might be either first or third person; the context shows it to be the latter. Ishmael has been definitely forsaken, and hereafter remains in abeyance until the end of the book; when, suddenly, he re-emerges in the epilogue.

The quarrel between the persons, however, does not by any means comprise the whole technical irregularity of "Moby Dick." There is the introduction of the form of dramatic dialogue; an innovation singularly successful, and remarkably in keeping both with the mood of the moment when it is introduced and with the general tone of mystical formlessness pervading the whole work. There is the adroit suspending of the narrative by those absorbing chapters of plain exposition, descriptive of whales and whaling; the gradual revealing of the secrets of the whale, while the final nameless secret is withheld, while fancy and terror feed and grow on suspense. There is the totally ideal development of the characterization, as Ahab and Starbuck and Stubbs and all the rest indulge themselves in the most high-flown and recondite reflections and soliloquies. Finally, there is the bizarre method of chaptering—each chapter a little sketch, each incident having its own chapter; some of the chapters only half a page in length, others a page or two; a hundred and thirty-five chapters in all, together with forewords on etymology and extracts, and an epilogue. In short, "Moby Dick" as a technical exercise is utterly fantastic and original. Melville has departed from every known form of composition; or rather, he has jumbled many forms into a new relation, choosing among them as fancy dictated.

It is safe to say that no literary craftsman of the present day would so much as dream of attempting the experiment which "Moby Dick" discloses on its technical side. Such an attempt would be answered by both critics and public with the ostracism which modern Western culture reserves for irregularity. Here we have a striking commentary on the rigidity of our present literary technique; a technique which rules style and matter, and dominates the literary field, as never before. We speak of ourselves as individualists, freely developing new forms; we like to regard the period of 1840 as a time of stilted and circum-

scribed literary expression. Yet the truth of the matter seems to be quite otherwise. We are slaves to the success of a literary convention, while the writers of 1840 were relatively free. I am not aware that "Moby Dick" was received at the time of its publication with any degree of surprise at its technical form, whatever surprise or opposition may have been called forth by its content. Neither am I aware that Melville himself felt that he was doing an extraordinary thing in adopting a unique but natural technical form for the expression of an original creative effort. His letters to Hawthorne during the composition of "Moby Dick" betray no self-consciousness on this score. In fact, he seems to have retained a perfectly free relation with his technical medium.

LINCOLN COLCORD.

(To be concluded.)

## THE LIBERATION OF INDUSTRY.

INVOLUNTARY unemployment appears as the outstanding symptom of economic disorder in modern civilization, and it arises, as I have shown, from the general failure to understand that private property in land and natural resources can be a socially expedient institution only if the rights of the public are protected against monopoly. I have also shown that protection is complete if those who hold exclusive possession of land or natural resources are required to pay to the community adequate compensation for the privilege; and I have stated that this compensation can be secured through the taxing-power of the State which is at present exercised in such a manner as to foster monopoly and penalize every form of productive effort.

We may appreciate the close connexion between unemployment and our revenue-problem if we stop to consider that the failure of our Government to secure revenue from the payment for privilege has driven it into levying intolerable penalties upon industry. So injured to this by custom have most of us become that we actually believe that the collection and spending of governmental revenue must necessarily be destructive of industry and must necessarily raise the cost of living. This is a fundamental error. The collection of revenue, when taxes are levied as payment for privilege, serves to protect industry from the exactions which monopoly is otherwise able to put upon it. Thus a tax levied on the value of the privilege of land-ownership, instead of depressing industry and raising the cost of living, encourages industry by opening up to its use the most favourable opportunities. It preserves competition, lowers costs and reduces the cost of living.

So, also, the spending of governmental revenue should create values greater than the amount of the expenditure. This, unfortunately, is not true of our Federal Government, which spends most of its revenue in paying for past wars or in preparing for future ones. It is true, however, to a very great extent of our municipalities, which spend large sums in public improvements, especially for the cheapening of transportation; but unfortunately the effect of these improvements is to increase the value of the land-owning privilege, and therefore what the people gain in one direction they lose in higher rents. Here again, an increase in the amount paid for the privilege of land-ownership would turn these publicly-created values into the public treasury.

The confusion of ideas on this subject is particularly well exemplified by the methods of our municipalities in the collection of revenues, and especially in the levying of taxes upon real estate. In fact much of this



confusion arises directly from the use of the term real estate, under which we combine two things utterly different in character; one, the land (representing opportunities) the possession of which is clearly a privilege; and the other, the buildings and other improvements upon the land, which are equally clearly the result of human effort in production. To levy a tax upon the former is to require payment for a privilege. To levy a tax on the latter is to penalize human industry. The first tax is preventive of monopoly; the second is destructive of industry. However, the failure to recognize these vital distinctions results in a practice which, with a few shining exceptions, is general throughout the United States, namely: the practice of lumping together as property in real estate the value of the land-owning privilege and the value of improvements upon land, and levying a tax on both together. In some of our States it is even unconstitutional to tax these values at different rates, so complete is the failure to see that land-ownership is a privilege. But recognition of this fact must come, and come soon, or there is grave danger that the forces of discontent, justifiably aroused but blind to causes and to consequences, will drive this country into a bureaucratic tyranny or a bloody and fruitless revolution.

At the present moment a strong and militant minority of these forces of discontent, is striving for a complete political overthrow of the existing economic order. Apparently without the knowledge that monopoly of land and natural resources does and must lead also to monopoly of wealth and credit, it is demanding nationalization of both land and "the tools of industry" and "the abolition of rent, interest and profit." Although these confused ideas are not finding general acceptance, there is nevertheless a widespread desire to penalize wealth without regard to its source by re-enacting the Federal excess-profits tax and by increasing the surtaxes of the Federal income-tax. Many make no distinction between an Astor, growing rich on the tribute paid by the citizens of New York for the use of Manhattan Island, and a Ford, profiting by means of his great service to the community.

To require heavier payment for the privilege of land-ownership would be to turn a larger proportion of the ground-rental of New York, a publicly created value, into the public treasury for the benefit of the whole community, and to make possible the reduction of taxation which cripples business. On the other hand, taxes on the profits of the motor-industry, or any other productive industry, do but discourage business, thus restricting output, increasing costs and prices and aggravating unemployment.

The taxation of profits is economically unsound. In so far as profits are the result of service to the community, a tax upon them discourages enterprise and industry and is therefore contrary to the public interest. But in so far as profits are the result of monopolistic control they can be curtailed or destroyed by the direct taxation of opportunity as represented by the ownership of land and natural resources. Thus, if the United States Steel Corporation is enjoying monopoly profits through its control of ore beds, taxation of these natural resources will put an end to the Corporation's ability to withhold them from use and thus restrict output. It will be obliged to operate these beds or to release them to others who will then be competitors. But taxation of the operations of the Steel Corporation, or taxation of its profits without regard to source, will restrict its operations and add to the cost of steel.

So also with the coal-mines. To-day the low taxes on the opportunity represented by their ownership make it possible, and in fact act as an inducement, to let the mines lie idle, thus restricting output and holding up the price of coal, while the taxes on operation penalize mining. The State of Pennsylvania levies a tax on each ton mined in the State, which tax is wholly pernicious, adding directly to price and discouraging mining. If such taxes as these were abolished, and increased taxes were levied on the privilege of ownership of mines, it would be profitable to mine more coal. The best mines, therefore, would be in full operation; there would be more men employed; there would be higher wages, few strikes and cheaper coal.

"Big business" dominates the industry of the country only through its control of natural resources—mines, oil-fields, water power, etc.—but the great majority of corporations and individuals employing labour are not a part of "big business" and have no such monopoly, and it is a mistake to suppose that their interests are antagonistic to those of the wage-earners. Most of them, however, are so oppressed by the unjustifiable exactions and restrictions of privilege and Government that they are often obliged to oppose the perfectly justifiable demands of the wage-earners for decent wages and constant employment. Yet it is now proposed to penalize industry still further by forcing upon employers the expense of unemployment insurance, or—what is even more foolish—by requiring them to pay wages to those whom they lay off.

Employers and wage-earners alike are vitally interested in unhampered business, and should co-operate to remove taxes and other governmental restrictions upon it. More important still, they should co-operate to secure from the holders of opportunity adequate payment for their privileges. Only thus can industry be freed from the obstruction of monopoly and only thus will it become possible in the future to secure revenue for Government without penalizing industry by taxation.

JOHN S. CODMAN.

(A fifth article by Mr. Codman will appear in next week's issue.)

#### APHORISMS.

THE value of everything depends on the circumstances in which it is born. We should not strive to bring forth thoughts which will make the world beautiful, for these will only be a living demonstration that to us the world is not beautiful. Weakness, once it is born, is eternally weakness. Our thoughts should be procreated when the whole world, not this part or that, is beautiful; for there is in these thoughts the strength of the world itself, and they are unshakable; for strength also when it is born is eternally strength. There are imperishable thoughts.

THERE are in tragic art incredible intuitions which soar with one inevitable movement through the net of rationality and probability and seem impossible in their divination and truth. There are thoughts so true and yet so apparently unattainable by the mind that when we hear them we can not believe that they have been uttered. The prison scene in "Faust" contains inconceivable things. It could have been written only in a unique state of madness.

THE artist is the bravest of all men. He allows himself to become insane when his demon bids him.

WE can die with calmness, but we can not endure the idea of death; we can suffer, but we can not bear the



contemplation of suffering; we can be happy, but we can not imagine the reality of happiness; we can love, yet love in general always seems to us to be as intangible as a dream. What do we derive from imagination, then, except a more intense realization of suffering and a less real apprehension of joy than experience can give us? Pure delight, in spite of this.

THE man who can support happiness can generally support grief as well; the main requisite in both cases being the capacity to accept things. There are men, however, who find happiness as hard to swallow as unhappiness; they suffer from both, and both become for them an argument proving the undesirability of life. They end generally by refusing to accept happiness on account of the existence of suffering, which they also will not accept; like Ivan Karamazov who in advance would have nothing to do with the harmony which he assumed the world would attain in a few milleniums, because meantime every human being has to suffer. This is a mode of thinking and feeling fundamentally paradoxical; it is a condemnation of life from the centre of an unattained harmony, and at the same time a negation of this harmony because it must issue out of life: whereas suffering alone makes us desire harmony, and harmony can be attained only through suffering. The strange thing is that this kind of men bear their own sufferings almost unconsciously, and add plentifully to them as if they desired more: it is the sufferings of others, of the world, that are so unbearable to them. They really take all the pain of the world upon their backs, but without being able to redeem it. But a great number of individual griefs are justified individually, for every pain accepted redeems itself.

THE nihilist does not desire a state of absolute annihilation; he desires to annihilate, and therefore that something—the universe—should exist to be annihilated. He desires Being as given fact and not-Being as his expression. In doing this he is the opposite of everything to which men have given the name of God; he is, indeed, the most real modern conception which we have of the Devil. When we try to delineate him he becomes immediately a myth instead of a man, as the exquisite and exact Turgenev must have found to his discomfort and delight when he drew Bazarov in "Fathers and Sons." The nihilist is, indeed, a myth, but he is only the more real on that account; he is something more than a man, for he is within the skin of all men; and though he is the symbol of death, he is a symbol of life also, inasmuch as perishableness is the condition of creation.

It is dangerous to think of men as mere classes, whether it be economic, social or spiritual, for that is bound to lead to the justification of one class, generally a small one, and the condemnation of all the others. It is dangerous to think of men as nations or even as races, for then one can find for the overwhelming mass of mankind no *raison d'être* except the conditional one that without them a particular race or a single nation could not have existed. It is dangerous to think of some ideal society in the future towards which our own life is moving, for that makes our whole reality relative and bereaves it of its unconditional, unique truth. It is dangerous to regard the primitive races still existing, as a sort of irrelevancy in our world, and to be concerned with Europe only and not with Asia or even with Africa. It is dangerous to do all these things, and yet it is impossible not to do them. No man would be great if these assumptions, along with the mystical negation of them, were not in him. Every great man incarnates in himself what mankind has attained—and has not attained—and in doing that he makes mankind irrelevant and at the same time in the highest sense relevant. This is the mystery of greatness.

THERE are no good and no bad men if we take the sum of everybody's existence into account, their rights as

well as their days, and allow as much reality to their dreams as to their waking hours. The unfulfilled desires of the virtuous are evil; the unfulfilled desires of the vicious are good; and conduct is not, as Matthew Arnold said, three-fourths of life; it is not even three-fourths of conduct. The desires which I do not express I must live with for ever, and endure their development, growth, transformation and degeneration within myself if I do not throw them out into the world. What dreams Marcus Aurelius must have had! Every night he must have been a sort of Tiberius. The faces of men tell us less than they should, because sleep as well as action traces lines upon them. The heads of men like Cæsar Borgia, who are known to have been cruel and conscienceless, have sometimes had an exalted and ethereal beauty which has astonished all men, and have preserved even in waking a strange look of tranquillity, as if they were frozen in some delightful dream. The faces of the worst murderers can be paralleled in ugliness by the faces of the most blameless saints.

ALL Utopian visions of the future are born of a very simple thing: fear.

ONLY one side of great men can be seen by those who have not a sense of human tragedy. The other side is so securely hidden from them that, when it is presented, they will be ready to swear it is some one else. This has happened with many celebrated men, and with the greatest of all, Shakespeare. People can not bear to think that a man as great as Shakespeare should have been not merely unhappy (that is our common lot), but actually wretched. Yet it is his "other side," or rather its astonishing fitness and incongruity with the side which we know, which makes him and every other great man alive for us. Otherwise a great man is a mere figure; but most people prefer figures, because these give an illusion of an individual triumph over those too real miseries from which man ordinarily and predeterminedly can not escape. The figure is not a mere man, even if he is scarcely a man. He is, at the lowest, an escape from man. We forgive the great their greatness; we enjoy it almost as if it were our own; but that the great should be miserable we can not forgive. What we value most in great men is our illusions about them.

To guess is more difficult than to reason.

MORALITY is not more good than it is taken to be, but more intelligent.

WHAT makes the poor ashamed is not their poverty, their disfiguring labour, shabby clothes and mean houses, but the consciousness that their humanity is always being implicitly denied by other classes. A man is ashamed when his humanity is not recognized; except he should happen to be inhuman on a grand scale, and should seek to put himself above men: the revenge of many who have started life in an inferior position.

IN the morning before getting up I can tell by the sound of the bells striking the hour in the town that the day is fine. We know whether people are good or bad by means as indirect or inexplicable as this: it is what our eye takes in but does not know it takes in that convinces us. So much are we at the mercy of our judgments; we imagine we make them, but they make or unmake us.

HATRED is, except in rare people, fleeting; but dislike lasts for a lifetime, and can rarely be overcome. Yet we hate always for a reason, and dislike for no reason at all, or for a reason of which we know nothing. It may be that what we call dislike is not an individual thing at all, but the reflection in us of an invisible, cosmic war that is being fought out in another dimension.

EDWIN MUIR.



## THE GREY MASS.

*Sheraya massa*—the grey mass—the great grey mass. So they are called, these men and women in their shapeless and ragged coats and their fur caps, pyramid-shaped or square. Grey they are and grey they were at the time of the carpenter tsar—long before the arrival of the soviets. But against this background of grey their colours stand out delicate and distinct.

Russia has always been a land of limitless contrast, and it is only with the help of this keyword that one can begin to understand the grey masses of Russia. The patience of the people seems infinite; their apparent sloth and stolidity is an age-old inheritance against which appears their love of quick *tempo*, the dash of their dance and music and the fire of their passion in fighting as well as in loving. The entire subject is so vast and all-embracing that one need only pick his facts in order to prove whatever conclusion he undertakes to establish.

A long line of people is standing in front of a low, yellowish house, apparently a better-class dwelling in one of the main streets of Moscow. A bread-line, no doubt, for it is early in the morning, the air is thick with falling snow and these men and women seem all bundled into unprepossessing clothing. As one approaches the building it resolves itself into the Art Theatre of Moscow, and one finds that those who appeared to be starving mendicants are really in search of theatre-tickets.

Again, one is stopping in what was once a fashionable apartment house and now is occupied by people less than fashionable. It is early in the morning. Men and women are going into what was formerly a courtyard with a small garden in it. They are all emptying their refuse-pails onto a heap which lies in the very centre of this courtyard in plain sight of all of the people in the apartment house. Artists? Barbarians? Explain it if you desire, and condemn it if you please.

The approach to Moscow seems most uninviting. One emerges gladly from a train which has been one's abode for four or five days, and descends into an old, dilapidated station which has been neglected for many years. Men and women dressed in the barest rags walk about in a quiet confusion. Little children in soft, plaintive tones beg for alms. Here and there appears an unkempt, bedraggled militiaman. Surely here is a city which is moribund and about to be abandoned by its inhabitants. Taking one's seat on a crowded Government transport-truck one proceeds at top speed to the centre of the city. Crowds of people darken the streets, *izvoschiks* ply up and down, automobiles of the Government, of foreign missions, of different organizations pass to and fro; here and there may be seen a motor-cycle or a boy on a bicycle. Shops of all sorts seem to be open and doing business; some of the older stores seem to be opening sleepy eyes, rubbing off the dust of many years, and confidentially and promisingly inviting one to purchase some of the merchandise which has been hidden behind their counters since the revolution. Thus, I was able to purchase kodak-films five years old, with the assurance that if I did not find them satisfactory the proprietor would return the money—a promise which in these days of fluctuating currency is quite absurd.

One goes to the cafés—the Empire or the Riche. In the coatroom, coats are received and checked in the most approved European manner. One is handed a menu, and to the music of what is probably one of the finest small-sized string-orchestras one may order some of the best dishes procurable in Europe—provided one have the capital necessary to enjoy such luxuries. There are the gypsies—the incomparable gypsies of Moscow; there is a splendid cabaret-bill, that is, as the Russians understand a cabaret—not the degraded, flashy exhibition of our Broadway, but a performance which somewhat resembles the Ueberbrettel cabarets of Germany. Wine may also be had, not the wine one can get in Italy, but some sort of wine which, one is informed, is constantly improving; and if one desires to be devilish, there are the *cabinets particulières*. At the Grotesque the performance lasts

until three. At the Empire there is a convenience which even Broadway has not yet attained—a telephone on each table, so that while dining one may talk to one's friends or perhaps explain how one is detained from home by some very arduous business matter (that is, provided the telephoning be done during a lull in the music). Also, while eating, one may be approached by a good-looking girl, well dressed, who bears all the earmarks of the bourgeoisie, and asked to buy tickets or bonds for the relief of men and women who at this moment are dying of starvation in the Volga region.

So, to the strains of Glinka, Tschaikowsky and Rimsky-Korsakov, one explains to one's friends that with money being solicited for the dying one feels almost as if one were in New York, and that by all these appearances Moscow is now returning to our own standards of progress.

A Yankee concession-hunter is said to have dismissed the plight of Moscow with these words: "All this place needs is a coat of paint." Had he applied that to the policy of the Allies and the United States towards Russia he would have been nearer the truth. But if Moscow needs only paint she is getting some of that. There are painters working at the Hotel Savoy, painters at the big department stores, cleaners at the millinery shops, varnishers at the typewriter-supply stores and wine stores. Looking out of a window of the Foreign Office I beheld a sight which transported me to Broadway and Canal Street. A man, heavily laden with empty millinery boxes, was making his way past the crowds on Kuznetsky Most. Hats for Easter! There is a law which defies all economics—the law that women shall have new hats on Easter.

In contrast to this picture is that of scores of beggars crowding every important corner. Death and contagion are present in every tramcar; one hears that so and so is "typhusing" or so and so is recovering from typhus. On the street one may suddenly be greeted familiarly by a wreck of humanity, and it is only after a few moments that one is able to recognize the features of a man whom one knew in New York. Yes, he has had typhus—but few people die here of typhus these days and if they can only have peace, disinfectants and drugs, they will soon be able to eradicate the disease.

One enters the office of a moderately important public official. He goes through his papers and touches a bundle, from which a familiar odour arises. It opens accidentally and one sees that it contains his midday meal—a piece of coarse dry bread. Outside the selfsame building stands a new Cadillac limousine waiting to take another official to some conference. These are the facts. One may draw from them whatever conclusions one likes.

Food! That is the thing which is uppermost in every one's mind. Although the scarcity is now less pronounced than it was a year ago, some little time in Moscow will enable anyone to understand the misery which in bygone ages prevailed in beleaguered cities. The fear of famine is contagious, and one soon begins to wonder whether one is not also suffering from it. One can easily visualize such quiet panic. If a huge metropolis like New York is subjected, say, to a railway-strike for only three days, one may note a significant change in the popular psychology—and Moscow has been besieged for seven years! No people but the Russians would have been able to withstand the nervous strain of such prolonged distress.

The scarcity of dwellings precludes ordinary standards of delicacy. People sleep as they can. In short, the whole of Moscow is camping, camping in a beleaguered city. Camping-rations and camping-quarters are what one gets and is grateful to get.

The chief American contribution to the advancement of civilization is plumbing. This, Moscow has never really known. The old palaces are signally deficient in conveniences of modern water supply and drainage. The average Moscovite used to take his bath in one of the numerous public-bath establishments, such as, later on,



were introduced in Western cities and known as Turkish or Russian baths. A German agronomist assured me that improved plumbing is a comparatively recent innovation even among the workers of Germany and that among the poorer classes in Italy and France, conditions of sanitation still remain little better than they are in Russia. Yet it is only by living for a while where it is so glaringly manifest that one can fully appreciate the reality of this defect. The English wife of one of the important People's Commissars is said to have characterized the situation with this poignant remark: "Conceive of an entire nation that does not pull the chain."

As one goes out on the Petrovka one sees that flowers are being sold, that museums are being patronized and that there seems to be a bookstore on every block. Then one marvels at these contrasts and at these inexplicable people, these grey masses, and presently one reaches the market on Sucharewka where "everything" is bought and sold and there one sees a picture which leaves one in a state of perplexed amusement. Among the women who stand on one side of the market is one who holds in the same hand the following articles for sale: a pot of spring flowers, a strand of human hair, and three spoons. After that . . . ?

One shrugs one's shoulders and in true Russian fashion one says, "*Noo—Wod!*"

CHARLES RECHT.

### A MISJUDGED HEROINE.

UNASSAILABLE as is the position of that greatest among the many heroines of Greek tragedy, the Antigone of Sophocles, she is still robbed of her rightful place at the side of Juliet among the immortal lovers of the world.

Antigone has all the daring of Héloïse in asserting her woman's right to love, and the pride of her reticence seems so English at times that one has to think of Clarissa Harlowe. How Sophocles must have loved Antigone! He has dowered her with more than the energy of Electra, stinging a laggard brother to a deed of vengeance, with more than the tenderness of Iphigenia in the great crisis at Aulis. Sophocles has consciously and deliberately created his Antigone as an illustration of a truth best expressed in modern times by Mrs. Jameson when she affirms that affections in a woman, whatever their power, are sentiments when they run smoothly and become passions only when opposed.

Antigone, nevertheless, is served up in the characteristic textbook style of Doctor Dryasdust as a conscientious objector stalking with the preposterous majesty of Mrs. Wilfer, until even a college class might be expected to die laughing if the whole thing were not made so intolerably dull by the inevitable introduction and notes. Such are the workings in practice of a theory that he who has written a treatise on the irregular verbs of Attic prose is equipped to dissect the soul of woman. Experts in the grammar of Elizabethan English are not permitted to speak pontifically about the love in the heart of Ophelia, and many a man born and brought up in London can not read Milton intelligently. In the domain of the classics alone is a wizened pedant, his mind saturated with the syntax of the moods and tenses of the Greek verb, tolerated in such hopeless perversions as those which transform the Antigone of Sophocles into a travesty as heavy as the English versions by which it is betrayed and traduced. The fact that the literature of the age of Pericles can survive the treatment it receives at the universities is the best possible proof of its vitality and importance. Our misconceptions of Antigone have not extinguished her!

Creon himself, despite the death to which he doomed her, could not extinguish Antigone. The violence of the scene between these implacable foes leads directly to the disclosure of the real nature of the feud between them. No conscientious objection of the abstract type so precious to Doctor Dryasdust flutters the bosom of Antigone when it transpires at last that the son of Creon is madly in love with her and that his love is returned. Vainly

does the cat get out of the bag—Doctor Dryasdust never sees it. He is like the innkeeper who disclaimed to Poe all knowledge of the animal on the top of the hog'shead. It, too, was a large and conspicuous cat. The Theban elders, when Antigone is led in after the departure of her lover, tell the whole story—love, they declare, has stirred up this strife of kinsmen, love, keeping a fiery vigil in the cheek of the maiden. Creon's hatred of Antigone, for no better reason than that she has won the love of his son, escapes him in spiteful observations to herself, to her sister, to the elders. Antigone is no fit wife for his son, he feels, and that prejudice finds expression with the persistence of dripping water on a stone. Doctor Dryasdust is deaf to the sound of that voice!

Antigone is not in the position of that heroine of Shakespeare's who never told her love. Her hot temper and her cool daring, that scorn of consequences which thrills one in the opening scene, are revelations of Antigone as a woman who loves, a woman who will assert her right to love. The difference between her sister and herself is the difference between a sister whose lover is fit to bear the name of man and a sister who has never had a lover at all. Antigone, gathering strength and courage from her communion with Hæmon, will bury the body of her brother whatever Creon may say or do. Ismene, the timid girl, shrinks from the prospect only because no man has ever folded her in his arms and kissed her lips. Hæmon, again, the lover of Antigone, is naturally ferocious, ruthless, yet he has taken a finer tone, a sweeter temper, from herself. Love has worked its miracle in the soul of each, and the power with which Sophocles can disclose so much in his series of flashing scenes, each no less swift than the lightning, attains a peak in what, were we dealing with a Parisian play, would be called the great third act. Hæmon rushes from the dead form of Antigone to slay his father, only to remember just in time all that he has lost, and then he slays himself. A comparison of this scene in the tomb with that of the catastrophe in "Romeo and Juliet" is exquisitely just, and still, with that parallel to make him pause, Doctor Dryasdust goes mumbling on. To him Antigone is a conscientious objector and nothing more. He refuses to acknowledge that Sophocles here is telling one of the world's perfect tales of love.

The explanation is to be found in a fantastic theory of these pedants that love, in the romantic and chivalrous manner, was unknown among the Greeks. They had no Isabellas, it would appear, no Rosalinds, no Violas, no Isabels—not an Ophelia or a Juliet. The intimation would be tremendous enough to require a particle of proof even if it were made by one who, like Shakespeare himself, knew the heart of woman well. When we encounter this sensational assertion in the course of a preposterous paper on the particles and the participles by a no less preposterous professor in the most preposterous of Greek chairs, we may recall the great chorus laid by Sophocles on the lips of his Theban elders as they caught sight of Antigone on her way to that tomb. She had found the courage to defy Creon to his face only because she loved Creon's son, and the fury of the father against herself arose from his perception that his son returned this fatal passion. It was fatal because the father was bent upon its frustration whatever the cost. The body of the dead brother was but the bone they picked between them, the stick to beat the dog with. Sophocles leads us to the very sanctuary of his genius that we may the more readily see how irrelevant to the greater issue of the play is the hurly-burly over the burial of the brother of Antigone. There is not the slightest valid objection to her deed of piety, as Creon readily admitted when he set out so tardily to rescue his son from the doom he had contrived for the lovers. That conscientious objection is blown up not by Sophocles but by the pedants who came after him, until it becomes a balloon from which they drop silly notes and sillier comment all about the play, as if they would stone it to death.

Nothing approaches the art of Sophocles in creating



from the very first scene of the tragedy the mood that will sustain the great theme of Antigone's wonderful love. Her spirit is aflame at the suggestion from Creon that her brother must lie dishonoured in death. Creon dared to transmit such a message not to the people only but to herself—"even to me!" she cries, facing her sister Ismene just outside the palace portal. The words in their setting are perfect as a revelation of the feud between Creon and Antigone. We are not to get their whole import until the climax of the action, when they stand face to face hurling their fury, yet it is easy enough to divine that this old man and this young woman are the grand figures of the tragedy. She stands forth to champion her woman's right to love whom she will. He incarnates the masculine challenge of that attitude; his is the gesture of disapproval, signifying man's purpose to dominate the heart of woman, to subdue it to his logic, to a social system, to a conception of law and order. Antigone retorts with a flat defiance of Creon's masculinities. The oldest of all the sex-battles is on. The genius of Sophocles contrives that for our greater edification it shall rage around a corpse.

So singular is the genius of Sophocles in this piece that words must be strained a little, and we may refer, perhaps, to the "swiftness" of its unity—to that quick, sharp talk of the characters, their energy in rushing through the action. Superlative praise is always risky, but it seems true that the "Antigone" of Sophocles is the most "terrific" thing in all tragedy. Its vitality would be incomprehensible were it accepted on the college textbook plane as a study of the conflict between human law and divine. When we remember that it comprises one of the most thrilling tales ever told of the course of true love, we gain an idea not only of the greatness of the Greek drama but of the imbecility of its modern interpreters. The tremendous popularity of the "Antigone" in the lifetime of Sophocles himself disposes of the idea that to the ancient Greeks love in the civilized sense of our English word was unknown. The remarkable runs of this play in Germany and in France—where the stage-versions were not usually adaptations but faithful translations—confirm the original Athenian verdict. All the world loves a lover. The conscientious objector is the darling of the few.

The striking feature of the catastrophe is the triumph of the principle for which Antigone fought with Creon—woman's inalienable right to love. It was a commonplace among the Athenians, who were so delighted by this tragedy and its teachings that they made Sophocles a general in the army. For nothing is more ridiculous than the notion that woman in the great age and community of Pericles and Aspasia was one of the possessions of man. She controlled her love-life with a freedom from adjustment to merely masculine standards which would not be tolerated nowadays in New York, in London, in Paris. That is the circumstance which imparts an unsuspected importance to the literature of the Greeks, to the great contests for supremacy in the tragic drama which made Athens ring with the name of Sophocles and the fame of his "Antigone."

There was no fear in any Athenian's consciousness of what his wife or his sister or his sweetheart would do with the freedom for which Antigone fought and died in the arms of her lover. Puritanism, strange as it must seem to our New Englanders, had its origin among the pagans. Its first—perhaps its greatest—exemplars were the heroines of the tragic drama of the Greeks. They originated the type of feminine relentlessness to which we now refer as the New England conscience. Phædra, mindful of her fair fame just when she knows she has but an hour to live, Cassandra, shrieking at the loss of her maiden state, the fair Helen herself, so eager to prove that it was some other woman who ran off to Troy, stun us with their anticipations of Priscilla. The right of the Greek woman in the age of Pericles to love whom she pleased meant no more than her freedom to follow in an affair of the heart the dictates of the most sensitive conscience that ever exasperated a family feud. Woman, to

whom love is life, will accept it nowadays only on terms made familiar to us in the shrieks of Electra, in the tearful laments of Andromache, in the reproaches and defiances of Antigone.

Antigone stands forth as the supreme heroine among all these because her fight for love was finest, greatest, glorified by the funeral rites for a dead brother. She could not live for love and therefore she died for it. Many another woman then and since would gladly have done the same but she was denied so glorious an opportunity. In the lexicon of woman, to die for love is to live for it.

Antigone has, then, an immediate claim upon the attention of the modern woman. Her fight is essentially that of the most superb creature in the vast portrait gallery of the Greek tragic drama. Antigone, first a burning topic in the Thebes of Creon, became a sensation in the Athens of Pericles. She will achieve her lasting triumphs in the Anglo-Saxon world, provided the next great revival of the humanities be not under the auspices of Doctor Dryasdust.

ALEXANDER HARVEY.

## MISCELLANY.

OCCASIONALLY some chance remark or piece of news causes me to marvel at the quickness with which new attitudes become accustomed attitudes. It is not many years since the argument that "woman's place is the home" was the very stock-in-trade of those who opposed the feminist movement. One heard it in conversation and from the rostrum; one found it in novels, magazines, and the daily press. Yet it is now so much a thing of the past that it was actually with a feeling akin to astonishment that I read the other day a Paris dispatch quoting this telegram from a young Bulgarian student at the Sorbonne to his sister who had just been appointed to a diplomatic post by her Government: "Woman's place is the home. Her work is to raise children, not diplomatic arguments; make layettes, not treaties; organize the household, not the conference. That is why, far from congratulating you, I blame you sincerely, although tenderly."

WHAT a strange, anachronistic sound this has to American ears! One feels like exclaiming, in the words of Cleopatra, "The gods confound thee! Dost thou hold there still?" I do not mean, of course, that one may not hear such sentiments in this country; one may; but the point is that one hears them but rarely. They no longer represent the viewpoint of a majority, or even of a very considerable body of opinion. The attitude which they betray is that of a minority which no longer has the power to stamp the image of its view upon the national life. The right of woman to be regarded as an individual, and to choose her occupation as an individual instead of having it imposed upon her by custom, because of her sex, is no longer seriously questioned in this country; and in this respect it is, to the best of my knowledge, far and away ahead of any other country. That is why, although I am not moved to any great enthusiasm by the ordinary patriotic shibboleths, I am, in this respect of the position of woman, a staunch patriot, an ardent and uncompromising one-hundred-per-center.

It has always seemed to me about as reasonable to assume that women, being women, ought to devote their lives to keeping house and bringing up children, as it would be to assume that men, being men, ought to spend their lives cutting one another's throats. By and large, men spend a good deal of time in this bootless occupation; just as women, by and large, spend a good deal of time producing male children who may cut one another's throats in the future, an occupation which may well seem, to many of them, somewhat bootless in itself. But no one would think of prescribing one occupation for all men, and I am extremely thankful to our feminists for having seen to it that in this country at least, no one shall prescribe one occupation for all women. Here, at least, women share with men the educational opportunities (such as they



are); they take part in public affairs (such as they are); they have pretty fair access to economic opportunities (such as they are); and no one questions their right to choose their occupation according to their individual taste. Indeed, so wide have they forced the door of opportunity that there appears to be no reason why they should stop short of the complete and undisputed right to be considered primarily as individuals, and only secondarily as a sex or a class.

THERE is something exceedingly repugnant to me about the practice of considering human beings as classes rather than as individuals. It is in effect a denial of those subtle variations of intelligence and temperament which make each individual so different from all others that an attempt, for whatever purpose, to treat of them, or with them, in the mass, is simply clumsy and ludicrous. Yet attempts to deal with human problems by regarding people as a class in their relation to those problems, are common at present; and I confess I can not see that much good is likely to come of them. It is the view of labour as a class, it seems to me, that makes the general attitude towards it so callous; in so regarding it, we are prone to look upon the individual labourer merely as a cog in a great machine and to deny him, in effect, the dignity of a human being; and organized labour has enormously strengthened this tendency by its insistence upon the claims of labour as a class rather than its claims as human beings. So, too, our most advanced feminists, I think, somewhat weaken their position by falling into the error of their opponents, the error which was so recently all but universal, namely: that of regarding women primarily as a sex or class. Such a view, like that of organized labour, strengthens class-consciousness and, by consequence, class-antagonisms; and to the extent in which it does this, it impairs the effectiveness of the movement.

I HAVE said, our most advanced feminists. Perhaps I should have been more exact if I had said our professional feminists, or better still, our feminists of the older generation. For the most advanced feminist is a very different person; indeed she does not know that she is a feminist at all. She is your pert young flapper, whose short skirts, bobbed hair, and candid acceptance of the world as it is, are such a trial to ladies of a generation which laced itself into tight stays, swept up all the filth of the street with its skirts, and was painstakingly taught to pretend that spades were not spades at all, but the gaily decorated little shovels that children use in building castles out of sand. This advanced young feminist of to-day steps into the freedom which has become her birth-right through the efforts of her forbears, and takes it all as naturally and unquestioningly as if it had always existed. She accepts as a matter of course a measure of social and economic freedom that would have shocked her great-grandmothers, and gives even her mothers many an uneasy hour; and it is for the very reason that it is for her a matter of course, that she is pretty certain not to abuse it. She is young, and when have young people not been guilty of extravagance? but she is also clear-eyed and honest and free from the antagonism aroused in her predecessors by their effort to overcome unjust discriminations; and it is for this reason that I am hoping much of her.

WHAT I am hoping of her is just this: that in her blessed state of freedom from the bitterness and antagonism towards men which has attended the struggle of women for emancipation, she will be clear-headed enough to understand that the latest stage to which organized feminism has come—the stage where it is trying to get equal rights with men, and yet retain special protection against the operation of our economic system—is in reality an admission of failure; that is, an admission that complete freedom is not to be won through any exclusively feminist movement. She will see, perhaps, that men themselves are not free, and that human freedom—freedom of opportunity for all alike, regardless of sex or class—is the thing to be

desired. She may, perhaps, go back over the course of the woman's movement, and give it dispassionate study; and if she does so she may discover that the one greatest passive factor in the success of that movement was the comparative freedom of economic opportunity in this country. From this she may draw the obvious conclusion that the way to final emancipation lies in the restoration of economic opportunity, and she may throw her strength into the movement towards such a restoration. Whether she do this as a feminist or a humanist, is no matter; in either case the effect will be the same. I do not know that she will do it at all, yet it seems to me that the calculus of probabilities is in favour of the supposition that in time she may.

JOURNEYMAN.

## POETRY.

### SYLVANUS ORIENTALIS.

Dark and laughing god  
Smeared with steaming earth,  
Underneath whose rod  
Beast and man have birth,  
In whose veins Time joins  
Present things with past,  
From your ceaseless loins  
Springs my dream at last.

Veering South, the geese  
Honk their lonely way  
Over lands where peace  
Broods in autumn grey.  
Spent and faint, the soil  
Lies beneath their wings,  
Trembling in the toil  
Of prefigurings.

Seasons change and pass,  
Dark and laughing god;  
Grass and snow and grass  
Mark each period.  
But your whirling laugh  
Catches up all Time,  
Joining half and half  
In the perfect rhyme.

Flame and shadow twist  
To the rounded form  
That your supple wrist  
Moulds from night to morn.  
Mountains writhe and moan,  
Climbing seas subside,  
Flesh and blood and bone  
Quicken at your side.

Turning in the dark,  
Seed and lover rise  
At the sudden spark  
In your burning eyes.  
Subterranean blood  
Rushes to its own  
In mysterious flood  
At your sanguine tone.

Morning bursts in flame,  
Twilight drips with fire  
When your woodland name  
Kindles their desire.  
Heart and bud and sod  
Bring your dream to birth,  
Dark and laughing god  
Smeared with steaming earth.

HERBERT S. GORMAN.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

### MR. MENCKEN'S THESIS.

SIRS: The letter of H. W. B., published in the *Freeman* of 2 August, in defence of Mr. Mencken's contention that culture flourishes only under an aristocracy, compels me to say that I believe his defence to be justified notwithstanding the high regard in which I hold the *Freeman's* opinions.

I assume of course that the *Freeman's* definition of culture is the same as Matthew Arnold's. If this be so, then one



might point out that despite America's great numbers of the independently wealthy, very little culture, in the strict definition of the term, flourishes among them or is even given encouragement. True, they may be building what one might call an aristocracy which may in time give impetus to culture, but it will take ages for them to breathe the cold, clean air of the spirit; as offspring and exponents of a miasmal materialism, they can hardly be expected to do so for many years to come. So long as there is a drop of truth in determinism, and until this coming aristocracy has overcome the repressive, biological factor of birth, they are, unless my philosophy be wholly wrong, due for many years of prayer before the altar of materialism. True, the *Freeman* may be partly right: if we alleviate the economic condition of man we may put him on the way to cultural health; but if we consider the history of evolution, and if Mendel was not an idiot, it seems fallacious to suppose that any royal edict will suddenly make him cultured. An ass without work, enclosed in a gold-lined stable, may have time for contemplation—nevertheless he still remains an ass. I am, etc.,

E. R. M.

### A SEDITIOUS SENTIMENT.

SIRS: Mebbe you saw this in the *Boston Transcript* and mebbe you didn't:

#### WHAT IT SPELLS.

P—owder  
A—sininity  
T—rouble  
R  
I  
O  
T  
I—diocry  
S—uffering  
M—urder

Things are looking up—what? I am, etc.,  
*Hebron, New Hampshire.* HAROLD HOLMES OWEN.

### THE STATE.

SIRS: In connexion with Dr. Lowie's articles on the State, in your issues of 19 and 26 July, it occurs to me that the following poem may be of sufficient interest to your readers to warrant your reprinting it. It is by Mr. Luke North, and appeared in *Everyman*:

#### THE STATE.

The strength of the State  
Is the weakness of the people—  
Its wealth is their poverty,  
Its dignity is their degradation.

Mighty State—  
Little Manorhood!  
Rome reared its splendour  
On sixty million slaves.

The pomp of the State  
Is the servility of the People—  
Its pride is their shame,  
Its glitter is their gloom.

The State is a superstition,  
Heartless, bloodless, beingless,  
Save as it draws sustenance  
From living creatures.

The palaces of the State  
Are the hovels, the slums,  
And the mortgaged homes  
Of the People.

The richest State  
Means the poorest People,  
And the greatest cruelty  
Of the few to the many.

I am, etc.,

C. H.

### AS ONE CORRESPONDENT SEES IT.

SIRS: Permit me to point out to the readers of your publication that the history of literature does not support the contention made in "A Reviewer's Notebook" for 9 August; and that both your reviewer and Mr. Brander Matthews, whom he quotes, are mistaken in asserting that criticism, even in the narrow sense of the education and disciplining of taste, "can never safely undertake to do much with contemporary literature"; and that "current literature should be left to the reviewer, who should do upon it the work of the reviewer; its critical appraisal should be left to another generation." Had these gentlemen taken the trouble to familiarize themselves with the work of the great critics, they would scarcely, I think, have dared pretend that the task of appraising the work of a contemporary is necessarily more hazardous for the critic than any other which he imposes upon himself;

and sought to turn the living away from the attempt of seeking to determine the value of the work of living authors. The history of letters is full of examples of solid criticism practised by critics upon their contemporaries. What Lessing wrote about the tragedies of his contemporary Voltaire remains criticism, in the very sense of the word favoured by your reviewer, for it educated and disciplined the taste of a nation. What Sainte-Beuve wrote of his fellow-romanticists remains standard, quite as much as what he wrote of the *Pléiade*. De Gourmont assures us "*Sainte-Beuve a fixé le caractère de presque tous les écrivains français et des hommes et des femmes qui ont joué un rôle intellectuel depuis la Renaissance jusqu'à après la moitié du XIXe siècle. . . . Il a frappé la littérature française à son effigie, et cette monnaie circule toujours.*" Very little of what has since been written of "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre," more exquisitely appreciates the work than does the notice published by Friedrich Schlegel shortly after the book appeared in print. Indeed, there have been few critics of the first rank who have not managed to criticize successfully some of their fellow-workers, and to educate and discipline taste thereby. Coleridge did so. So, too, did Brandes and France and De Gourmont. Criticism of contemporaries has even been practised with success in America. Have we not a particularly pertinent example in Ambrose Bierce's remark "Professor Matthews is nothing if not accurate, and he is not accurate"? Now, I do not think that either your reviewer or Mr. Matthews will succeed in diverting any real critic from the business of seeking to appraise the literature being produced about him. For, it can almost be said, he would not be a true critic did he not make like attempts from time to time. But I think that statements of the sort in which you have indulged, tend to deprive him of his fruits by pretending that success can not by any means be his; and it is to prevent the creation of so vicious a prejudice that I am writing to correct them. I am, etc.,

*Westport, Connecticut.*

PAUL ROSENFELD.

THE Reviewer says: "This vivacious person is a little ahead of his text. Neither Mr. Brander Matthews nor I intimated that the great critics did not sometimes deal with their contemporaries. In fact, Mr. Brander Matthews spoke at length about one notably successful instance of the thing being done. I say, however, that the great critics seldom dealt with their contemporaries, and that with few exceptions, this is the part of their work that, if one had to choose, one would soonest spare. Arnold's criticism of Tolstoy, for example, is sound enough, but one would gladly exchange a hundred like it for his essay on Joubert, Heine, Gray, Marcus Aurelius. My suggestion is merely that since the field of literature is so large and what one person can accomplish in it is so little, one need not risk having a bone for a shadow. The temptation to take a personal and special view of one's contemporaries is insistent and insidious—why not avoid it? There will be critics after us; wisdom, probably, will not die with Mr. Rosenfeld or with Mr. Brander Matthews. They can deal with our contemporaries disinterestedly, which we can never be sure of being able to do. Why, then, not let them do it?"

### FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

SIRS: In your issue of 19 July you comment on a recent utterance of Mr. Hoover with regard to trade with Russia. You speak of it as "one of his characteristic impromptus on the unimportance of Russian trade," and contrast British views as to the great importance of such trade. I am sure you did not intend to misrepresent Mr. Hoover's position, but it seems that you can not have read his statement carefully. He himself refers explicitly to "the great economic and moral benefit of the world as a whole" which would come from a restoration of Russia. His exact language was as follows:

If we can take history as any criterion, when Russia was running full blast previous to the war, she took one per cent of the exports of the United States which, when reduced into terms of working-time of our workmen and farmers, meant roughly the employment of, say, 30,000 Americans. We are, therefore, not nor ever will be dependent upon Russia for the physical welfare of our people. Consequently, an appeal to our direct interest in trade can not carry far. An appeal to us based upon the greed of American concessionaires will not carry far either because we as a people can not approve of anybody, Americans or otherwise, exploiting the Russian people. So that appeals to us for financial assistance must not be based upon impossible promises or attempts to prove our damage by our refusal. It must be an appeal to our sincere desire to assist the recovery of Russia, not only for her own benefit, but for the great economic and moral benefit of the world as a whole.

You apparently overlook also the fact that the main gist of Mr. Hoover's speech was not the unimportance of trade with Russia but the absence of any basis for trade because of the tremendous decline in production, and the absence of any basis for investment by which to increase that production, because of the attitude of the Bolshevik Government itself. On this latter point I suggest that you attempt to find out just how much countries like Germany and England, which have trade-treaties with Russia, have been able to accomplish



in the way of investment there. German business leaders are saying very frankly that the attitude of the Bolshevik Government is such as quite to preclude undertaking any important enterprise in Russia.

I note also your statement with regard to the Russian grain-crop of this year. It is certainly fortunate that excellent weather seems to have brought an approximately normal yield per acre, which means a marked increase of crop over last year. But permanent agricultural recovery must rest on the effects not of weather but of human endeavour.

I have seen no official Soviet claim that as much land was planted in Russia in 1922 as in 1921, and the planting in that year was the lowest ever known up to that time. Outside the famine-area, there may have been some increase of area sown, but no complete official statistics have been given out, and at best Russian crop-statistics are of very doubtful accuracy. According to your own statement, the crop in the present Soviet Russia will be about half of the pre-war crop in the same territory. Before the war, Russia exported only one-eighth of its grain-output, and a half crop means a big deficit in home supply.

Since about seven-eighths of the Russian population consists of peasants who must feed themselves, there will always be incentive enough to plant a good deal of grain. It remains to be seen whether there is incentive enough to plant for a surplus. No fair and intelligent student of economics can wish to see the big estate restored. What is needed is to make peasant-agriculture efficient. No doubt the Soviet Government has been forced by dire necessity to adopt a more rational policy towards the peasants—in fact to surrender its Communistic principles in dealing with them—but it is still uncertain whether, with the absence of free private export, the difficulty of transportation, and the dearth of products for the peasant to buy in exchange for his grain, he will try to plant more than enough for his own needs. In any case, the increased crop of this year is certainly not in any significant measure, if at all, a result of Soviet policy. I am, etc.,

Washington, D. C.

E. DANA DURAND.

Chief, Eastern European Division.

#### TOO MUCH FOR US.

SIRS: The puzzled onlooker at the crazy whirl of things needs a new book of reference upon the use of words and sentences in matters political. Or possibly only a new guide and mentor—will you take the job?

If so, please explain why the newspaper-statisticians seem so worried about the loss of purchasing-power of the workers during a strike, and the consequent loss to business, and yet never seem the least bit concerned about the more permanent loss of purchasing-power—and business loss—that will result if half a million men go back to work at reduced wages?

Also, why do the mine-owners, railway-operators, or whoever is in trouble at the moment, cry out one day for Federal intervention and Federal troops "to protect the interests of the general public," and the next day declare with deep feeling, that "all they ask is that the Government shall keep its hands off"? The common, garden variety of mind might think that these utterances showed their sense of advantage in the fight; but that, of course, would be a base injustice.

Then, too, for the past decade some of us have been studying dictionaries and the like to discover why, in our press, the Belgian who resented the unauthorized presence of German troops in his country, and vented his feelings by sniping, was lauded everywhere as a patriot, whereas the Mexican or Haitian who shows, in the same primitive way, his resentment of the unlawful presence of American troops in his country, is called a bandit, with appropriate adjectives. There seems to the puzzled onlooker a certain similarity between the two cases. I am, etc.,

New Canaan, Connecticut.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

### BOOKS.

#### A CAPTAIN OF PRIVILEGE.

THE late E. H. Harriman<sup>1</sup> was one of the most successful domestic imperialists of the last generation. Through a series of shrewd and intrepid manoeuvres, he effected successive expansions and annexations in the railway-field that made him a great power in a few years. Mr. George Kennan's biog-

raphy affords us a view of the imperialist process, the secret of which is a progressive conscription of credits. Bond-issues against the property in hand serve for the acquisition of new properties. The new territory is made to yield an army of golden doughboys for further conquests. Through a clever application of this technique, Harriman became the dictator of a considerable part of American transportation. In various branches of industry during the same period other shrewd and relentless men likewise were carving out empires. From the point of view of profit-making, they brought a certain coherence to our sprawling industrial development, and in the process they piled up the greatest personal fortunes that the world has ever seen.

Obviously Mr. Kennan takes altruism as the keynote of Harriman's character. At the outset of that brief and headlong career that transformed him from a prosperous stock-broker to one of the dictators in American transportation, Harriman is said to have remarked: "What I most enjoy is the power of creation, getting into partnership with Nature in doing good, helping to feed man and beast, and making everybody and everything a little better and happier." Eight years later, with the greater part of his work done, he declared in a letter to a clergyman in Omaha: "Accumulation of money must come with success in developing enterprises, and should be looked upon only as evidence of the success of the undertaking. The satisfaction lies in the evidence that the enterprise is successful and will be of permanent benefit to humanity."

The rôle of altruism is not unfamiliar in the public statements and official biographies of those who were called captains of industry in our period of industrial expansion and concentration. In fact it seems to have become a convention. Mr. John D. Rockefeller appropriated the character in his autobiographical interlude written some years ago. James J. Hill's biographer cast his hero in the same mould. In the life-insurance investigation in New York, back in our days of innocence, the head of a large institution whose funds had been appropriated generously for questionable purposes described his understanding of the activities of himself and his associates as "eleemosynary." Indeed this monopolization of altruism and morality by the leaders of privilege in this country has become almost a bore. One longs for a biography that would begin: "At the age of nine John W. Plutus dedicated his life to the art of accumulation. He resolved to get everything he could find, whether it were nailed down or not, and to keep on getting it until, if God spared him, the only people independent of him should be the unemployed." We think Harriman made a mistake in his cavalier attitude towards money-getting, as represented by Mr. Kennan. As an altruist he seems to have displayed only mediocre talent; as a money-getter he enjoyed a strikingly successful career.

To take an instance, Harriman's relations with the Chicago and Alton road would seem to have been a complete failure so far as altruism is concerned. We can not figure that the venture was anything but handsomely profitable, though Mr. Kennan belittles this aspect of it. Mr. Harriman was the leader of a syndicate that secured the road in 1899 by purchasing ninety-seven per cent of the capital stock for \$38,815,000, a generous price.

<sup>1</sup> "E. H. Harriman, a Biography." George Kennan. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Two volumes. \$7.50.



"They then," explains Mr. Kennan, "proceeded to readjust the accounts of the company by crediting to surplus the sum of \$12,444,000, which the old managers of the road, in previous years, had taken out of current income and invested in permanent betterments." With this money they voted themselves a special dividend of thirty per cent. They then reorganized the finances of the road, effecting a total capitalization of about \$100 million. In view of the purchase-price, this would seem to be a liberal capitalization, and certainly more than covers the \$22 million which Mr. Kennan states were spent on permanent betterments during the four years that Mr. Harriman guided the destinies of the road. In a defence of this adventure, covering eighty pages of his book, Mr. Kennan sums up with a quotation from Mr. Paul D. Cravath that the whole transaction was "legal from beginning to end." That reassurance was scarcely necessary. No one ever accused Harriman of doing anything illegal. In fact, under our judicial system it would be virtually impossible for a man in Mr. Harriman's position to commit an illegal act. But somehow Mr. Kennan fails to make clear the connexion between the Alton affair and "the permanent benefit of humanity," or the ideal of "making everybody and everything a little better and happier."

Mr. Harriman was born in 1848. At the age of fourteen he manifested a healthy disgust with the processes of education, in announcing to his clergyman-father that he had decided to quit school and go to work. He became a runner in a stock-brokerage office, and through natural shrewdness and application acquired a seat on the Stock Exchange at the age of 23. In 1881 he made his first railway-venture; purchasing, with some associates, "a small, badly-managed and unprofitable railway, thirty-four miles in length," with a terminus on Lake Ontario. Harriman was attracted by the road's strategic position as a feeder for either the New York Central or the Pennsylvania. He placed the road in first-class physical shape. Earnings, however, did not increase, and his associates sold out their shares to him in October, 1883. Early the following June, by clever salesmanship, he got the two larger roads bidding against one another for his little strip. The New York Central took an option which was to expire 1 July; in the interval the Pennsylvania people came with a much better offer. When the Central people appeared to renew their option, on the last day, Harriman "was absent from his office," and, Mr. Kennan adds, "before he returned, the specified time had elapsed and the owner of the road was at liberty to conclude the bargain with the Pennsylvania, which he immediately did." As Mr. Kennan casually remarks, his profits from this clever deal were large.

About this time Harriman bought a railway in Florida, and speedily resold it at "a profit." A purchase of railway-bonds during a stock-market slump similarly resulted in "substantial profit," and during a period of expansion and uncertainty in the Illinois Central road, he bought large quantities of the stock and made "a large profit." Shortly after this he became a director of the road, as a proxy for certain Dutch interests with which his brokerage firm had had a connexion. His powerful personality soon appeared as a dominant figure in the management, and under his spur the road entered on a period of expansion and development.

His next conquest was the Union Pacific. This

Government-subsidized railway had become insolvent after the panic of 1893. J. P. Morgan failed to disentangle its finances. Later Jacob H. Schiff was induced to make the attempt of putting it on its feet. As the reorganization proceeded, says Mr. Kennan, "Mr. Schiff and his associates became conscious that some powerful influence was working against them. Their plans were opposed in the Pacific Roads Commission and in Congress; a larger part of the press was hostile to them; objections were raised and difficulties created by many holders of the old stock, and evidences of antagonism were apparent in the financial circles of both America and Europe." Mr. Schiff learned that Harriman was behind this opposition; he went to him and asked him his price. Harriman said there was none, but almost immediately he added that he might work in harmony with the reorganizers if they would make him chairman of the executive committee of the reorganized road. He finally compromised on an executive committee membership.

This, it seems to us, is one of the most illuminating and interesting incidents of Harriman's career; but Mr. Kennan makes little of it. A study of the inner workings of this affair might well throw considerable light on some of the dubious processes that influence great economic events. It seems unfortunate that Mr. Kennan chose to leave so much in darkness.

Harriman's next acquisition was the Southern Pacific System, which embraced a network of some 9000 miles of track. The control of this road was secured largely through the purchase of stock in the open market, for which purpose the Union Pacific directors voted a bond-issue of \$100 million. Mr. Harriman and his associates, as he remarked, now controlled an empire.

The course of empire is expansion and conflict, and it was natural that the Harriman imperialism should come in conflict with the Hill-Morgan imperialism to the north. Both desired to protect their frontiers by the acquisition of the Burlington road. The Hill interests effected the annexation. Then Harriman conceived the bold idea of getting the coveted bit of railway-territory by quietly purchasing in the open market enough shares of the Northern Pacific Railway, the new owner of the Burlington, to make him master of the property. The Hill-Morgan interests held the Northern Pacific under a loose rein, with not more than a fourth of the shares in their hands, so the strategy was feasible. Harriman came within a few shares of winning. At the last moment his rivals scented the game and poured their millions into the market to forestall him. Northern Pacific common soared to \$1000 a share and a money-panic shook the country from end to end. Mr. Kennan absolves Harriman from any blame for the panic, with its ruin for thousands of innocent investors, because on the day when the catastrophe broke Harriman bought no Northern Pacific stock. Similarly in the latter days of August, 1914, Sir Edward Grey negotiated no secret treaties. As for the rival imperialisms, they compromised their differences and formed the Northern Securities Company, a sort of league of railway-imperialisms, for their mutual benefit. Eventually the Government succeeded in dissolving this holding-organization, but the dissolution, in the course of events, greatly increased Harriman's fortune. In fact, a shrewd



observer called it the greatest success of Harriman's career.

Possibly he was right. Mr. Kennan's book gives us no good evidence to the contrary. Unfortunately Mr. Kennan leaves us in doubt as to the essential motivations of Harriman. In his story the hero is virtually an inarticulate figure. There is no indication that the broader economic and social implications of his dashing imperialist designs ever entered his head. There is no indication that he considered the general well-being save as an adjunct to profits and power. The narrative does not bear out the author's assumption of an underlying altruism. Harriman seems in the end a man unendowed with an essential philosophy, incapable of attaining to one. Mr. Kennan makes much of the efficient care which Harriman gave to his empire, but, after all, that was simply good business. We are left with the suspicion that this "colossus of roads" was merely a creature of instinct, like Fabre's beetles, driven by a mysterious energy to move on unwittingly along a blind path. In any event, there are the elements of tragedy in this story of a man endowed with such unusual powers of assimilation and execution, moving in such a narrow range and leaving no enduring heritage for his fellow-countrymen.

HAROLD KELLOCK.

#### "DAUGHTERS OF FIRE."

GÉRARD DE Nerval wrote "Sylvie" a few months before his body was found hanging in the sinister Rue de la Vieille Lanterne. Amid the extravagant dreams that he described so clearly in "Le Rêve et la Vie" his mind, regaining for a period its gentle lucidity, returned to the Valois, the grey and green country with poplars and white roads and pale blue sky, where he spent his boyhood. The story is a chain of memories rising like mist, and the figures of Sylvie, Adrienne, Curly-head, and the aunt, wander through de Nerval's fresh prose, against a background of daisies and buttercups, streams and vine-covered village houses. Among the foliage are delicate oval temples built by philosophers towards the end of the eighteenth century; and all the country-side has known Rousseau.

Sylvie cared little for memories of the Genevan philosopher, and looked everywhere for fragrant wild strawberries. I told her of the 'Nouvelle Héloïse,' quoting some passages that I knew by heart.

'Is it good?' she asked.

'It is sublime.'

'Better than Auguste Lafontaine?'

'There is more tenderness in it.'

'Oh, well,' she said, 'I must read it then. I'll tell my brother to get it for me the next time he goes to Senlis.' And I went on reciting fragments of the Héloïse, while Sylvie gathered her strawberries.

There were two loves in de Nerval's youth, before he saw Jenny Colon, the Aurélia who was to haunt his maturity. One of them was Sylvie, "so alive and so fresh, with her black eyes, her clearly-cut profile and delicately tanned complexion;" the other, Adrienne, seen once only during a rustic dance. De Nerval's thought drifted again and again to Sylvie. After he had become a Parisian, he went occasionally to Montagny for the Festival of the Bow, and danced with her until morning, and talked to her of the childhood they had spent together. Once they paid a visit to Sylvie's aunt and dressed themselves in marriage-garments of the past century, while the old woman made them a golden omelette. Sometimes they dreamed together, watching "the glow of the sun fading from the foliage and the still surface of the lake," until Sylvie's brother put an end to their meditations, telling them the time had come to go back to Loisy.

But there was a change in Sylvie at each visit. For a while she made lace; then, when the demand for it lessened, she sewed gloves for the Dammartin trade. She grew to look more and more like a young lady of the city. The furnishings of her house altered and the poet found less and less in it of the past he was seeking. Finally, she married Curly-head, and he saw her for the last time among her children.

"Sylvie" may be one of those books that will survive. It is simply and freshly written, and intensely personal. Perhaps de Nerval put more of himself into this easy story than into any other work, for he wrote from a saturation of childhood impressions, and the pages flowered from him naturally. One seems to feel in them more fully than elsewhere, *le bon Gérard*, who was the friend of Gautier and the disciple of Victor Hugo, the young romantic Gérard of 1830, with hair like a smoke of gold, who even in those flamboyant days retained so much of the clarity and delicacy of the eighteenth century. One understands better the gay and wistful and clear-headed Gérard, with his precise and coloured style, of whom Gautier said: "One need not trouble to see Cairo, because Gérard de Nerval has been there."

We remember Gérard de Nerval too much, alas, for his eccentricities, and forget the good-humoured, vivid prose of the "Voyage en Orient" and the "Amours de Vienne," in which there is so much that recalls Sterne. In our day when travel is once more popular, it would be interesting if this side of his work were to appear; it is so whimsical, so clearly written, so French. One wonders what has become of that mystic half-brother who wrote "Les Chimères," and plunged into exotic religions and philosophies, the man in whom the Symbolistes found a precursor. There is a gay sensuality and restraint in "Les Femmes du Caire"; good sentences follow one another in rich profusion, and the whole surface of the prose is flexible and smooth.

"Octavie," the third story translated from "Les Filles du Feu," is indeed a memory of travel, but an elusive quality, charming as twilight, has dimmed the style. While journeying in Italy, the poet meets a young English girl, and they walk together through the old streets of Pompeii. Years later he finds her again, living in the same hotel, but faded, the wife of a paralytic. "Emilie" is an episode of the Napoleonic wars, and suggests an early story of Turgenev. But neither of these tales (excellently translated, by the way) has the depth and authenticity of "Sylvie," which dominates the volume.

CLARKSON CRANE.

#### DE SENECTUTE.

It is somewhat disconcerting to discover in a book on old age<sup>1</sup> by a man who admits being old—a former university president at that—the same spirit of revolt against the apparently inevitable, the same dissatisfaction, that we have always considered the peculiar attributes of youth. Dr. Hall tells us that

age has the same right to emotional perturbations as youth, and is no whit less exposed and disposed to them. Here, as everywhere, we are misunderstood and are in such a feeble minority that we have incessantly to renounce our impulses. Marie Bashkirtsev has betrayed the secret of how the pubescent girl, and Karin Michaëlis of how the woman of forty feels, but no one has ever attempted to explain the sentimental nature of ageing men or women. Even Solomon and Omar Khayyam presented only the negations and not the reaffirmations of the will to live.

Dr. Hall's discontent is not without justification. When he tells us how he wrote the book during his enforced leisure, after he had reached the age-limit and had severed all his connexions with what had been his daily work, we feel that this closing of the gates behind the old is a species of cruelty not unlike the barring of them in the face of youth. In a way, it is more cruel; for youth has its hopes, and old age has not. Against this enforced idleness Dr. Hall protests fervently if calmly. The main thesis of his book is that "intelligent and well-conserved

<sup>1</sup> "Daughters of Fire." Gérard de Nerval. Translated by James Whitall. The Sea Gull Library. New York: Nicholas L. Brown. \$1.50.

<sup>2</sup> "Senescence, the Last Half of Life." G. Stanley Hall. New York: D. Appleton and Company. \$5.00.



senectitude has very important social and anthropological functions in the modern world not hitherto utilized or even recognized. The chief of these is most comprehensively designated by the general term synthesis, something never so needed as in our very complex age of distracting specializations."

Dr. Hall tries to be very calm and judicious. Before he ventures to give his own opinions he devotes more than half the book to a résumé of what others have said about old age. There are chapters on literature by and about the aged, on the history of old age, on its biological aspects and its medical treatment. The effect on the reader is similar to that produced by a mediæval treatise on natural history, where almost every sentence begins with "Aristotle says," or "Theophrastus says," or "Pliny says." General philosophical reflections are interspersed with dietary regulations, such as the Pythagoreans mixed theorems about right-angled triangles with admonitions against eating beans. The fault is not primarily the author's, for he has gone through the literature conscientiously if somewhat uncritically. The fact is that for all the modern progress in many branches of biology and all the current talk about the prolongation of life, our scientific knowledge of old age is perhaps not very far in advance of the mediæval knowledge of natural history. Consequently, if the reader wades through these chapters he will learn many interesting anecdotes, a large variety of opinions both professional and lay, but practically nothing about the processes involved in growing old.

Dr. Hall himself realizes keenly the lack of scientific information on the subject. He deplores the fact that while there are specialists in other branches of medicine, there are no physicians whose specialty is old age. He has tried in his own way to help remedy the deficiency of data on senescence by addressing a questionnaire to a few score of "mostly eminent, and in some cases very distinguished old people." Of the replies received, the most interesting are those relating to religion. They call seriously into question the popular notion that people become more religious as they grow older. But inquiries on other matters elicited no information of any great consequence; a very natural result when we consider that a man does not become an expert on old age by merely growing old, or even eminent or distinguished. The author is left, therefore, to draw his conclusions not so much on the basis of what old age is, as on what he would like it to be. He thinks of it as the period when the excitement of youth and the grind of middle age are over, and one is set free to direct the mind's accumulated wisdom to the problems of the world. "What a priceless crop of experience in these *post-bellum* days remains unharvested for want of precisely the objectivity, impartiality, breadth, and perspective that age alone can supply!"

Undoubtedly Dr. Hall is to a great extent right. But (if I may be allowed a mixed metaphor) he has of necessity been skating on thin ice and it is not surprising that he should presently find himself in hot water. The fact that in the returns to his questionnaire the query "What temptations do you feel, old or new?" remained in most cases unanswered, does not suggest that the tumult and the shouting have died. Even if it be true that dispassionateness comes with old age, does it follow that youth can not achieve it? Is it not true that if the strain and anxiety involved in our present-day methods of making a living were got rid of, the young might also attain "objectivity, impartiality, breadth, and perspective"—as, in fact, despite their environmental handicaps, they still succeed in doing to a far greater extent than the old? It is doubtful whether the mellowness sometimes associated with old age is due primarily to internal physiological causes. Certainly, with the attainment of one's ambitions or the realization that they are unattainable, the strain of life is loosened; and the relief from responsibility, and from the necessity of getting along with people in an official capacity, would exercise a salutary effect on anyone's peace of mind, regardless of his age.

Dr. Hall does not seem aware that the problem of how to deal with the old is only a part of the general economic problem of allowing every person the opportunity to do what he desires. It is (to all but the old) only a small part of that problem, for it is less important that an old man is displaced by a younger one than that men of whatever age rarely receive the opportunity to follow their natural inclinations. Dr. Hall's proposal that the case of every old man should be judged upon its merits instead of being decided automatically on the basis of his age, might well raise more questions than it would solve; for who is to do the deciding, and what guaranty is there that the decision would be impartial and just? Dr. Hall is really attacking the question from the wrong end, for the treatment of old age should begin in youth. The only solution of the problem would seem to lie in an increase of opportunity to the point where all may follow their bent, at least as an avocation; and in such a decentralization of power that the old, having accumulated none, will have none to give up. Under such circumstances an old man would have no regret at being relieved of responsibility, and his younger colleagues would not be anxious to get rid of him, since they could look forward to no more freedom and to no new access of power.

A. W.

### JAPANESE-AMERICAN RELATIONS.

THE publication of the Honourable Ichiro Tokutomi's reflections on Japanese-American relations<sup>1</sup> is a significant event. Mr. Tokutomi is a member of the House of Peers, an editor, and one of the first literary critics in Japan. The original work from which these chapters are taken, sold more than three hundred thousand copies within a few months after its appearance. According to the translator, Mr. Tokutomi represents "a large majority of the Japanese people." Of these facts every cautious reader will take note.

The thesis of the work is simple. Americans look upon the Japanese as sinister imperialists; while the Japanese, deluded people, look upon America through rose-coloured glasses. The idea that the United States is a peaceful country which fights only righteous wars, is pure fiction: consider the Mexican war and American operations in behalf of civilization in the Caribbean! America broke open Japan to get trade, and would have blown up the gates if the Japanese had not yielded. Still, it must be said that American diplomats in Japan have been on the whole rather decent. Since the Russo-Japanese war, America has turned against Japan. Why? Because Japan has grown up; she is no longer in tutelage; she is an imperial Power; she has a navy and an army and must be respected. She is a serious economic rival everywhere in the Far East. There's the rub! Americans are busy gathering in trade and concessions on the mainland, and they resent Japanese operations in that sphere. The expansion of Japan is an economic necessity; the expansion of the United States is not made imperative by a pressure of population. Nevertheless the American Government has been preparing for a long time to destroy Japanese power in the Pacific: witness the naval enterprises of the past twenty years. Handshaking and speeches at banquets will not have the slightest effect in improving relations between the two countries. The Japanese are a peaceful people, but the United States will do well not to push them too far. The Japanese want the rights which are accorded to Zulus and Hottentots in the United States.

Little comment is necessary. Japan has a very strong case for her special position in the Orient; a position not unlike that maintained by the United States under the Monroe Doctrine. Unfortunately, Mr. Tokutomi has not chosen the most happy way of presenting the case, but it must be remembered that this work was written for a Japanese audience before the Washington conference was held. Perhaps for this very reason the volume ought to

<sup>1</sup> "Japanese-American Relations." Ichiro Tokutomi. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.50.



be read by every American who wishes to understand the currents of opinion and temper in modern Japan.

Mr. Kawakami's work on Japan's Pacific policy is a more useful and informing book.<sup>1</sup> There is little sentiment in it. There is hardly a rhetorical flourish. The author gets right down to business early in the morning by saying: "After all, the point of danger is China." He knows that the whole diplomatic game turns on the economic interests of the East. In the light of this knowledge he surveys the Washington conference, the Shantung question, and the Siberian entanglement. Every page flashes light upon the realities of the situation. Mr. Kawakami says flatly that England would have stood by the Japanese alliance if the United States had not come into the quadruple agreement, "for it can not be denied that Britain is in fear of the growing power of the United States, against which she sees a safeguard in the alliance with Japan." Mr. Kawakami thinks that Mr. Balfour made the original draft of the four-Power treaty, and that Baron Shidehara framed the final draft which was the basis of the convention.

With considerable vigour Mr. Kawakami defends Japan's operations in Asia. He is of the opinion that Japan has accepted as inevitable the policy of exclusion adopted by the United States. "What annoys Japan is the peculiar fact that whenever she secures some economic privilege, railway or mining, fishery or lumbering, in Siberia, Manchuria, Mongolia or China, a hue and cry is sure to be raised in Europe and America . . . Japan's sin, if sin it be, lies in her eleventh-hour entrance into the company of international freebooters who, having divided among themselves all the riches of the world, are now putting forth a Sunday front and preaching morals to the belated Japanese." This is illuminating, and a consideration of the matter from this sublime height is worth a library of rhetoric.

Yet both of these works leave something to be desired. Just what is it that the capitalists of the world want in Asia? What will it cost to get it? Who will profit from it? How much better off will the masses of any country be when they have got it? Will it pay to fight for it? Let us have a list of the goods: coal, oil, iron, beans, rice, and so forth. Let the editors, diplomats, and missionaries keep silent while accountants reckon up the booty and inform us whether it is worth a million lives and one hundred billion dollars. It is to be suspected that Mr. Kawakami knows more than he says.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

#### SHORTER NOTICES.

"THE struggle for coal and iron, for the possession of Alsace-Lorraine, for the Saar basin, for Briey, for Morocco and her rich iron mines, and so on, was the chief cause of the world-war." This is the heart of Michel Pavlovitch's little volume entitled "The Foundations of Imperialist Policy."<sup>2</sup> Here, in brief form, is an analysis of the philosophical theory of imperialism, Marxian theories of imperialism, the economics of capitalism and finance in relation to expansion, and imperialism as the last stage of capitalism. The upshot of it all is that modern wars are over coal, iron, oil, investments, and exploitation of backward places. This is not new. A great many people who are not communists, like Mr. Pavlovitch, hold identical views. The strange thing is that this is a volume of lectures read to the Academy of the General Staff of the Russian army during the winter of 1918-19. What would happen if West Point and Annapolis should substitute something of this kind for the politics and economics for intellectual eunuchs only, now supplied to soldiers and sailors in training? Mr. Pavlovitch's book is the kind that should be suppressed by our enlightened Government; and for that reason I commend it to general readers.

R. A. T. S.

ADMIRERS of that pleasant old *fantoche*, Monsieur Bergeret,<sup>3</sup> will be happy to see his mild adventures reproduced in a clear,

adequate English; they will be charmed again by these familiar ideas, soothed by the purring of meditations already rich in years, calmed by incidents too remote to distract them from the observations of the kindly sage. Monsieur Bergeret addresses to his dog, Riquet, words that one has read elsewhere in the pages of M. France; and he walks quietly through the Luxembourg Gardens, beside the statues of the queens, under a tender, grey sky, thinking with smiling scepticism what he has thought in three other volumes, sadly amused at the more obvious discrepancies of mankind. His mind, during the novel, plays over the last years of the Dreyfus Affair and an unsuccessful royalist conspiracy, the leader of which is ultimately elected to the Municipal Council as the Republican, Socialist and Nationalist candidate. There is the Baronne de Bonmont who, "one summer night, between the Bois and the Etoile, took unto herself a new lover," and who felt that the prince's letter in the lover's pocket, pressed against her own bosom during an embrace, "endowed her little private adventure with a national greatness and the majesty of the history of France." There is Mme. de Gromance, who found it necessary to visit the Baudouins of Felix Panneton, in order to save France and put her husband's name upon the list of candidates. Most of all, perhaps, the reader will be reminded of certain fortunate aspects of the land of France. Other countries have their prisoners sentenced on dubious evidence, their own Dreyfuses and Mooneys and Saccos and Vanzettis. But where save in France do the intellectuals write successfully against stupidity, which alone is international and immortal?

C. C.

#### A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

It is a great thing to produce a book that is really needed. The next best thing, probably, is to produce a book that points towards, defines and clears the way for one that is really needed. This second-best service has, I think, been well performed by the thirty Americans who produced the symposium published early in this year under the title "Civilization in the United States." One can hardly say that such a book was needed, or that it is in itself of much value. Its plan makes for sterility. It takes a cross-section of American life, poses it starkly, and makes a report upon it; and hence inevitably it adduces little that is not already quite well-known, it gives voice only to dissatisfactions already quite articulate, and suggests little that is not already obvious. The table of contents is printed on the cover; and one can look at the subject of an essay, and without opening the book can know at once what will be said about it. There is also, as far as I can see, no thread of a unifying principle to hold the essays together; they are detached and, strictly speaking, unrelated. The volume is large; it comes to more than five hundred pages; and one lays it aside, wondering like Mr. Weller's charity-boy at the end of the alphabet, whether it is worth while going through so much to get so little. I can not see that it tends in any way to enlarge or revise, or even by re-presentation significantly to clear and sharpen, one's view of the civilization that we live in.

ONE thing, however, it does. By virtue of its own mode of approach to its general subject, it indicates plainly the direction that such an approach should take; and this is a very great service indeed. The writers may abundantly console themselves with a consciousness of it, should they ever come to feel that they have not done quite what they wished to do or produced the effect that they wished to produce. They have opened the way for another kind of work, organized on another plan and much greater in scope, which shall really do all that they had in mind to do, and much more; and as literary achievements go in these days when so much is written without purpose and read without effect, there is glory enough in this feat to go around among many more than thirty. What this volume points to, what it calls for, what almost inevitably it will evoke, is a competent *history* of civilization in the United States; a history of the spiritual development of this people, taking account of all the factors in that development, and grouping them in their proper relations. I wonder that such a work has not been already projected, since the time is apparently

<sup>1</sup> "Japan's Pacific Policy." K. K. Kawakami. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$5.00.

<sup>2</sup> "The Foundations of Imperialist Policy." Michel Pavlovitch. London: Labour Publishing Company.

<sup>3</sup> "Monsieur Bergeret in Paris." Anatole France. Translated by B. Drilien. New York: John Lane Company. \$2.50.



quite ripe for it; but as far as I know, nothing of the sort has been thought of. There is great store and abundance of political histories, histories of the people, general histories; but there is no history of our civilization.

THE strangest thing about this present book is that it gives no direct intimation of this idea. One wonders how its editor, Mr. Stearns, could possibly have missed it. How could his thirty collaborators have been so close to it for so long, how could they have had it sitting at their elbows all that time, without seeing it? Here would have been a sort of unifying formula at least, which in default of a unifying principle might have held the essays measurably well together. If it had been continually in the mind of each writer that while his function was merely to report a phenomenon, the important thing nevertheless is to relate that phenomenon, in its proper place with reference to others, in a general line of causation—if, I say, each of the writers had had this in mind, it would inevitably have affected his work, and the book would in consequence have gained greatly in force. How differently, and how much more effectively, for example, might the writers have expressed themselves upon such topics as the law, education, journalism, scholarship and criticism, the intellectual life, the family, if they had composed their essays under the constant admonitions of this idea! In the treatment of journalism, say, let it pass as highly important that Mr. Macy should tell us how bad our newspapers are and what is the matter with them; yet the really important thing is to know why they are so bad, and if in their badness they yet are "a gauge of the American mind," to know all the social causes, as far back as one can trace their operation, which make them so.

OR, again, consider the depressing picture that Mr. Britten and Mr. Lovett draw of education. It is not overdrawn; far from it, every intelligent person in the country knows that it is not. Yet the important thing is not the reassertion of so much that is already well-known, though I am the last person to disparage the virtue of iteration. The important thing is to know the social causes that have culminated in this triumph of ineptitude, and to come thereby into a position to judge whether, as long as those causes remain in operation, American education can be improved. If scholarship, criticism and the intellectual life are at a low level, the thing is to know whether they must remain there, and if not, under what conditions they can be raised; and it is not possible, obviously, to know this without knowing all the causes and conditions which throughout the course of our civilization have prevailed to bring them where they are and to keep them there. It is hardly conceivable that Mr. Macy, Mr. Britten and Mr. Lovett would have written quite as they did if they had had an abiding sense of the *relative* importance of their task. It would not have been possible, I am sure, for Mr. Spingarn to put out the counsels of perfection which end his essay on scholarship and criticism, if he had been continually admonished by the sense that there may be inexorable conditions upon our cultural development which make his suggestions nugatory and cruel, and that it would therefore be of the first importance to find out whether such conditions really exist, how they come into being, and what is the history of their operation.

THUS the book might have done intentionally what it now does without intention; it might have put its impressive array of phenomena before the reader in such a way as to show that in the minds of the writers there was this strong sense of the need for an interpretation of those phenomena by the light of history. One may not complain of Mr. Stearns and his associates, however, for failing to make a plainer intimation of this need; for my part, I am so grateful to them for intimating it as plainly as they do, that I shall not hold their indirect and negative method against them for a moment. If the reader

will keep in mind what I have already said, he will see as clearly as I do that the book points nowhere but towards a history of American civilization to be planned and written by some Guizot, and he will join me in sincere and respectful gratitude to the writers as being the first to perform this excellent service. It remains then, perhaps, to say a few words about this needed book and about the qualifications for its authorship.

THE task is one for a man who, rather than a historian in the technical and rather narrow sense in which we understand the word, is primarily a man of letters. He should have a profound sense of history and of public affairs, and scholarship enough to make proper use of the labours of the technical historian; but this proper use implies a development of the critical faculty, a tact, measure, and balance of judgment that is, I think, only to be had—and is at all events best to be had—as the fruit of literary training and incessant commerce with letters. He should be, as I said, some Guizot, but a Guizot of our own time, with ability to appraise and elucidate the relation between the cultural development of a nation and its economic development, between its spiritual life and its economic life. He should be, and must be, a fundamental economist; he must know, that is, the fundamental postulates and definitions of economics, and know how to apply them in his interpretations of economic life.

I HAVE often said that the next step in criticism would be by way of determining the relations between the spiritual activities of mankind and the economic system under which they are practised, and my observation has been much resented. Oddly, this resentment has been expressed for the most part by persons who have most to gain from such an inquiry; persons upon whom the existing economic system bears so hardly that they have but the dregs of energy to devote to the spiritual activities which they most wish to pursue. It seems strange—or would seem so if one were not aware of the extraordinary infatuations which human nature puts upon itself—that persons so situated would resent the simple suggestions that man after all, must eat and be housed and clothed; that he has only so much energy at his disposal, and that as much of it as is put upon one thing must be taken from other things; that it is worth while to consider whether the economic system that requires him to put so much energy into keeping himself warmed and fed, does not correspondingly shorten the amount that he can put into the exercise of spiritual activity; and that it might therefore be a good thing to make sure that the present economic system is really the best or, from his own point of view, most desirable.

LOGICALLY, a survey of the history of our civilization would begin with, and work onwards from, the history of our economic life. The principle upon which it would do so is so old and well-established that it was clearly perceived by the satirist Persius and after him by Rabelais in his account of Gaster, "the first master of arts in the world," with practical omnipotence over the activities of mankind, both spiritual and physical. In this way, such a book might very conceivably manage to give just the turn that current criticism needs—or rather, that the modern critical mind most needs—and without which both criticism and the mind which produces it must remain muddled, addled and ineffectual. On all accounts, therefore, I should say that this work is far and away the one most needed at this time. It would enable us fully to understand the untoward phenomena which Mr. Stearns and his associates now merely photograph, by showing us the chain of their causation; and to deal with them at all, we must understand them—merely looking at them does no good and deploring them does less. It would also, more than any other single work, I think, set the course of criticism anew, bring it out of its uncertainty, bewilderment and depression, and put it on the way to knowing what it really wants, and wants to do.



### Unrestrained joy from New England:

SOME friend sent me the *Freeman* last year and without exception it's the only magazine I've ever read that's never tiresome. I wish its circulation were a million or more. I would have subscribed without inducement, but your wonderful critique of 'Ulysses' by Mrs. Colum has made me yearn to know Joyce.

### Los Angeles finds only one fault:

THE *Freeman* is better than ever, and I am boosting it all I can. Just one little criticism—the type is too small. If you could emulate the — in this respect it would be about as near perfect a paper as we can expect to get this side of paradise. That number of 5 July was splendid. Please send sample copies to these persons.

### A New Jersey philosopher:

WHAT converted me to the *Freeman* was the lack of that damnable seriousness which is the feature of most of the liberal weeklies. The *Freeman* is written with the consciousness that the world will toddle along even if all liberals should burst and all presses crack. I like that spirit.

### Reckless Richmond:

YOUR letter of 6 July in regard to gambling one dollar on a ten weeks subscription to the *Freeman* was so intriguing that almost I was tempted to depart from the path of virtue and gamble. When I read the sample copy of the periodical that you so kindly sent me I resolved that I *had* to gamble.

However, my native caution is such that I am unwilling to risk perfectly good United States currency even on so dead sure a thing as the *Freeman*. It so happens, fortunately, that I have a Canadian two-dollar note. I am sending it to you herewith and in return for this bit of paper you may enter my subscription to the *Freeman* for ten weeks or as many additional weeks as the money may cover.

### We penetrate even to a Montana village:

SINCE my introduction to the *Freeman* I have more than benefited by every number. To a mother with every minute filled during the day it gives just that touch that is needed in the evening. I find myself running over new ideas during the day. A very small town affords no such food for advancement.

However, circumstances recently led me to feel I must give it up, but the numbers that have reached me recently, through your generosity, make that impossible—I can not resist.

THERE are various ways of learning to think, and weeding a garden is not the poorest of them. One learns, for example, that no skill is required to pull up the plants, but that the interloping vines and grasses take firm hold. Again, the hardy-looking bullies among the weeds succumb dully to the gardener's ju-jutsu and prove to have their entire being near the surface, while the slender, swaying clover seems to grip the centre of the universe in its defensive tug.

All of this is not unlike the difference between magazines that base their claim to recognition upon serving what they call popular taste, and those that aspire to make a paper that a highly cultivated public ought to want. In time of stress the "popular" paper finds itself friendless and learns that men need not "descend to meet"; the one that is guided by a star receives confirmation of its faith that intellectual honesty is not the best, but the only policy.

You, who read this, are doubtless one of the "regulars," but how about those that still walk in darkness? Introduce them, even if only for a trial-period of ten weeks. Use this:

*Hitch the FREEMAN to my friend's star for ten weeks; the enclosed dollar pays for it.*

HIS NAME AND ADDRESS ARE:

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SIGNED.....

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Send to THE FREEMAN, New York, N. Y.

### Cleveland rates us highly:

THE money-order is for a year's renewal. 'When I Consider Thy Heavens' is real music. The *Freeman* is a God's blessing!

### How crime-waves begin:

I ALREADY have a yearly subscription to the *Freeman* in New York City, and I am taking this additional short-term subscription for a rather curious reason, which may divert you for a moment.

Some one in the apartment house in which I live when I am in New York is stealing my copy. If I could not get the *Freeman* in any other way, I should no doubt take to stealing it myself, so I take this action in accordance with the dictates of a psycho-analytic conscience, and also because I have wanted this book of Joyce's for some time.

In three months the other fellow my subscribe on his own hook—who knows?

### From a newly-enfranchised Maine voter:

I MUST thank you for the sample copy of your paper which you sent me at the request of Mr. —. If I were not intensely interested in its political news, I should not fail to appreciate its literary value. I enclose a check for six months subscription.

### Rochester, N. Y., speaks:

Did you ever hear about the high-school class, which when it graduated took for its motto, 'We've reached the top'? Well, our town is like that, too. To be popular, we must boost our town, always, and we must believe that the Republican party can do no wrong. So you readily see that when one quotes the *Freeman*, one gets 'in wrong,' but one does not mind; the main thing is to be 'in right' with oneself.

Long live the good *Freeman*! Don't you think that the thick gloom of ignorance is beginning to lighten a little bit? May the 'fraction,' which you now stir and refresh, 'become not an integer only, but a square and cube' and the whole round world. (Quotation from Carlyle.) I shall try to get subscribers.

### A Chicago Methodist!

INASMUCH as I am rather keenly interested in 'the magazine in an old man's garb but with a vigorous young heart' which the July *World To-morrow* commends so vigorously, I shall be very grateful if you will send me a sample copy to the address given above. I think it was the *Double Dealer* that recently remarked editorially that the *Freeman* is the best edited of all the magazines for which the editor is permitted to do his own thinking. At least that was the sense of the statement.